NATION

Arunachal's flood situation grim, over 33,000 affected

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BUSINESS

Markets climb for 2nd day on fresh foreign fund flow

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SPORTS

All eyes are on Rahul in second 4-day game

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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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B'luru Top Cop, 3 others suspended over stampede

RCB, KSCA booked for stampede; Despite having no permission they went ahead with victory rally

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday suspended Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda and three other senior police officials for the stampede in front of Chinnaswamy Stadium, which left 11 people dead.

He has also ordered the arrest of representatives from RCB, DNA event managers, and the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) while handing over the probe to a one-man judicial commission headed by retired High Court judge of Karnataka, Justice Michael Cunha.

Bengaluru Police have registered an FIR against RCB, DNA Entertainment Pvt Ltd, and KSCA.

The stampede occurred on Wednesday evening in front of the stadium, where a large crowd had gathered to celebrate the RCB's IPL victory.

The other suspended officials are Additional Commissioner (West) Vikas Kumar; Deputy Commissioner of Police, Central Bengaluru, Shekar H Tekkannanavar, and Assistant Commissioner of Police Balakrishna.

The FIR, lodged at Cubbon Park Police Station following a complaint by a police inspector, lists RCB as accused 1, DNA Entertainment as accused 2, and the KSCA Administrative Committee as accused 3.

According to the FIR, after RCB won the IPL trophy on Tuesday, there were celebrations at night and police officials were deployed till 5.30 am on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, around 6 pm, KSCA Chief Executive Officer Shubendu Ghosh requested for permission from Cubbon Park police inspector to organise victory celebrations on Wednesday evening at the stadium if RCB won. The inspector said if RCB won, lakhs of people would gather and the police would be deployed for night security arrangements as well.

KSCA was also informed that if celebrations are organised at the stadium, lakhs would gather and police would need time to make security arrangements and traffic diversions.

Subsequently, permission was denied citing security reasons and traffic snarls, but KSCA, DNA Entertainment Pvt Ltd and RCB allegedly insisted on holding the celebrations on 4 June.

The FIR added that on Wednesday morning, the RCB franchise announced the programme on social media, inviting people to the event, despite having no permission from the competent authority.

The FIR stated that security was arranged at Vidhana Soudha and for transporting the RCB team from HAL airport to Taj West End hotel and later to Vidhana Soudha premises.

Since the programme was scheduled at the stadium at 5 pm, the complainant stated that lakhs of fans gathered though the stadium can only seat 35,000.

"Around 3.10pm, the gates at locations with the largest crowds were opened to let people inside. This led to a severe stampede at the gates," it further stated.

The case was registered under sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 115 (voluntarily causing hurt), 118 (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt by using dangerous weapons or means), 121 (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt to deter public servant from his duty), 190 (every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object), 132 (assault or criminal force to deter a public servant from discharging their duty) and 125(12) (acts endangering life or personal safety of others) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Meanwhile, RCB announced Rs 10 lakh each for families of deceased

Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner G Jagadeesha, leading the magisterial inquiry, said, "I will submit a report within 15 days." Of the 56 injured, 46 have been discharged, while 10 remain hospitalised and in stable condition.

Govt to come up with SOPs for events

Home Minister G Parameshwara announced that the State government will draft a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for large-scale events. "Such deaths shouldn't happen. Most victims were youngsters aged 20–25. They came to celebrate, not to lose their lives," he said.

The minister also hinted at ignored warnings from senior officials against holding the event in haste but withheld further comment pending the inquiry findings.

"No one expected about three lakh people to come against the stadium's capacity of 30 thousand. According to information from Bangalore Metro around 8.7 lakh people travelled till 11pm (on Wednesday). You imagine how much crowd had come," he said. —PTI

>>>*More on Page 2*

The damaged fence in front of Vidhana Soudha after the felicitation ceremony of RCB team in Bengaluru on Thursday
PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

We had arranged more than 5,000 personnel but lakhs of people came...
—DK Shivakumar, DyCM

To ensure security and bandobast, the Bengaluru city police deployed a total of 1,380 personnel. Additionally, 13 KSRP personnel (each comprising 25 personnel) were deployed
—Govt to HC

Seemant Kumar Singh is the new B'luru Police Commissioner. He was serving as the ADGP in the Anti-Corruption Bureau. Earlier, he was M'luru Police Commissioner.

CID to probe stampede, HC takes suo motu cognisance

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

The Karnataka government on Thursday informed the High Court that the investigation into the stampede outside Chinnaswamy Stadium, which claimed 11 lives and injured 56, has been handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). A Special Investigation Team (SIT) within CID will be constituted to ensure an independent and thorough probe.

The High Court, which took suo motu cognisance of the incident, directed the government to submit a detailed status report by 10 June. A parallel magisterial inquiry, led by the Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner, is also underway and expected to conclude within 15 days.

The State government's status report noted that over 2.5 lakh people had gathered for the RCB felicitation event. A total of 1,380 police personnel and 13 KSRP units were deployed. Despite this, severe crowding occurred at Gates 1, 6, 7, 17, and 21.

Although all 21 gates were open, bottlenecks emerged. Emergency services on site included fire engines, ambulances, D-SWAT units, and a command-and-control vehicle — though the government admitted these were insufficient for the scale of the emergency.

The Advocate General said the stampede was triggered by the announcement of free entry by the IPL franchise.

Advocate Lohith, who filed a PIL plea, told the court that the people wanted answers on four specific points. Who authorised the felicitation event? Was it the Karnataka government or the state cricket association? What responsibility does the government have in honouring players who have not represented the state or country? Also, why was the event 'split' between Vidhana Soudha and Chinnaswamy Stadium? and what crowd control and safety arrangements were made?The bench observed that large public events must be guided by clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). "Ambulances must be available at the venue, and there should be clarity about the nearest hospitals," the Acting Chief Justice noted.

Responding to this, the AG said that ambulances were indeed present, but admitted they were not adequate for an emergency of this scale. "The issue was not their absence, but the number," he added.

The matter will be heard next on 10 June. —*PTI*

INDIA REPORTS 4,866 COVID-19 CASES

HERE IS A STATE-WISE BREAKDOWN OF:

1,487 Kerala	538 WB
562 Delhi	436 Karnataka

1 more dead in K'taka

A 65-year-old man in Davangere, who died of cardiopulmonary arrest on Thursday, has tested positive for Covid-19. This takes the toll 7 in Karnataka.

2024 saw highest-ever hoax bomb threats

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

Hoax bomb threats made to the Indian civil aviation sector in 2024 rose by over 300 times over the last six years. Almost 60 per cent of these messages were sent using social-media platform X.

1,019 such threats were received in 2024 as compared to 330 made between 2018 and 2023.

611 fraudulent threats were issued on X , followed by 218 via e-mails sent to airport operators and airlines and Central Industrial Security Force, 47 verbal, 45 phone calls, 29 written and six text messages.

The threats were issued against over 600 domestic and international flights of multiple Indian carriers, leading to a "major" operational and financial hit to the airlines, the passenger itinerary and comfort and a "mega" scrambling of the security paraphernalia.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) tweaked the procedures to convene the Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) in the wake of these huge numbers of messages being sent over social media.

Security personnel and bomb-disposal teams conducted "limited or full-scale" anti-sabotage and sanitisation checks in all the cases.

The social-media handles used were "mostly" created minutes before the menacing posts were published.

The airlines suffered an estimated Rs 3 crore loss while following the standard operating procedures in case of hoax calls. The online medium was used because it provided a fair amount of anonymity to the perpetrators. —*PTI*

Calcutta HC grants bail to influencer Sharmistha Panoli

KOLKATA, 5 JUNE

The Calcutta High Court has granted interim bail to social media influencer Sharmistha Panoli, who was arrested by Kolkata Police for allegedly posting a video with communal comments. The court ruled that the complaint against her did not disclose any cognisable offence. The 22-year-old law student was apprehended in Gurugram last week following an FIR filed at the Garden Reach Police Station in Kolkata. Justice Raja Basu Chowdhury ordered her release on a bail bond of Rs 10,000 and instructed her to assist with the investigation. The court also mandated that she could not leave the country without permission and directed police to ensure her protection, as she reported receiving threats post-arrest. —*PTI*

Dassault, Tata tie up to make Rafale jet parts in India

HYDERABAD, 5 JUNE

Dassault Aviation and Tata Advanced Systems Limited have signed four production transfer agreements to manufacture Rafale fighter aircraft fuselage components in India.

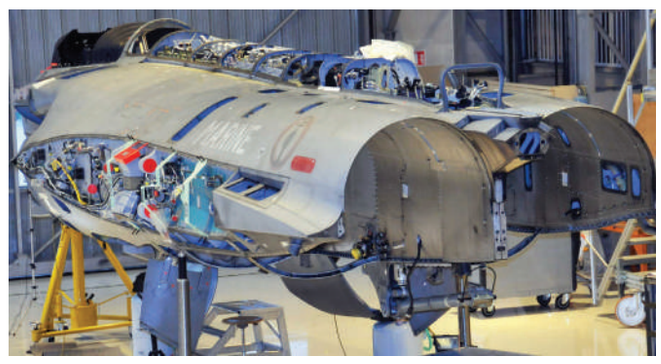
Tata Advanced Systems will set up a cutting-edge production facility in Hyderabad for the manufacture of Rafale's key structural sections, including the lateral shells of the rear fuselage, the complete rear section, the central fuselage and the front section.

The first fuselage sections are expected to roll off the assembly line in FY2028, with the facility expected to deliver up to two complete fuselages per month.

"For the first time, Rafale fuselages will be produced outside France. This is a decisive step in strengthening our supply chain in India," Eric Trappier, chairman and CEO of Dassault Aviation said.

This supply chain will contribute to the successful ramp-up of the Rafale to meet the quality and competitiveness requirements.

The partnership reflects India's remarkable progress in establishing a modern, robust aerospace manufacturing ecosystem that can support global platforms, said Sukaran Singh, chief executive officer and managing director, Tata Advanced Systems Limited. —*PTI*



For the 1st time outside France, Rafale fuselage production will take place in India
PHOTO: X

AMARNATH YATRA CUT DOWN TO 38 DAYS

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

The Amarnath Yatra will be held for a shorter duration of 38 days for the first time from 3 July to 9 August, amid security concerns .

The Yatra has been cut short to 38 days from the usual period ranging from 45 to 60 days every year.

Various Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) will be deployed, jammers will be installed to protect the convoy during its journey.

Roads leading to the Pahalgam and Baltal routes to the Amarnath Cave shrine in Jammu and Kashmirand national highways will be temporarily blocked. Pregnant women and those below 13 years and above 70 years of age will not be allowed to go on the Yatra. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Vande Bharat train service between Katra and Srinagar on 6 June, with the train operating from 7 June. —*Agencies*

GOVT VS E-COM FIRMS

Govt to sue Amazon, Flipkart for sale of non-certified goods

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), an agency under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, is likely to sue e-commerce giants Amazon and Walmart-owned Flipkart, seeking compensation from for allegedly selling non-BIS certified goods on their platforms.

Two teams of BIS officials conducted a search and raid operation at the warehouses of Amazon and Flipkart. The officials seized non certified products like insulated flasks, insulated food containers, metallic potable water bottles, ceiling fans, toys, baby diaper, casserole/ insulated hotpot, stainless steel water bottle, and insulated steel bottle products. , BIS had said in a statement on 19 March.

The government body would seek a compensation based on the value of the seized goods, while filing the case before a magistrate's court.

The BIS Act 2016 authorizes the agency to seek compensation of up to ten times of the value of non-certified goods sold. It can also prosecute the companies for lapses.

BIS supervises the development and implementation of standards for various goods and services in India.

Both Amazon and Flipkart did not immediately respond to requests for a comment.

The agency seized over 3,000 products worth Rs 36 lakhs, which were without the mandatory BIS standard mark from Amazon's warehouses in Chennai in Tamil Nadu. The agency, during raids, seized items like baby diapers, casseroles, stainless steel water bottles and insulated steel bottles from Flipkart's warehouses. However, the value of products seized these warehouses has not been revealed.

Both Amazon and Flipkart are yet to issue a statement. —*Agencies*

Footwear lay scattered outside Chinnaswamy Stadium a day after the stampede in Bengaluru on Thursday; fencing around Vidhana Soudha was damaged as lakhs of people gathered to witness RCB's felicitation

PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD/ PTI

Overcrowding, free passes caused the stampede: Police

50,000 were within a 1km radius of the stampede site, leading to a crush

A broken stair case railing at Chinnaswamy Stadium

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

Confusion over the victory parade, free passes, overcrowding and limited seats at the Chinnaswamy Stadium are the reasons that led to stampede that left 11 people dead and over 30 injured.

The initial chaos that later turned into a stampede began as several cricket enthusiasts, who did not have entry tickets to the stadium, tried to swarm into the premises, sources in the police said.

During the chaos, some people fell on the ground, some got injured while trying to scale huge gates to gain entry into the stadium.

Most of the deceased were youths, including men and women, with several of them being students.

The stadium had a capacity for 35,000 people, but 2-3 lakh people had come. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said, "There are small gates. The people entered through the gates. They have broken the gates also, so a stampede has taken place." The Bengaluru Traffic Police at 11.56 am on Wednesday announced that there would not be a victory parade but only a felicitation function at the stadium. However, the RCB team's management at 3.14 pm announced that they would hold a victory parade at 5pm."

This left the fans confused about whether a parade would be conducted or not. Police sources said that even though they had made it clear that no victory parade would be held and that those with tickets would only be allowed to enter the stadium, fans in large numbers gathered outside the stadium and many among them also jumped the gates to gain entry.

According to the police, 50,000 people were within a 1km radius of the stampede site and the number just kept increasing. Siddaramaiah said that people and fans had gathered beyond their expectations. In front of Vidhana Soudha, more than 1 lakh people had gathered and there was no untoward incident there. *—PTI*

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

"We (police) tried to discourage the government as well as the RCB franchise on Tuesday night against having any celebrations on Wednesday. We told them it would be ill-advised and recommended holding the event next Sunday when emotions would have cooled down. Naturally, the government would want to take mileage out of it.

-Senior police officer

For the BCCI, the IPL concluded last night (Tuesday). We had no knowledge of such an incident occurring, so how can we (BCCI) be held responsible for it?

-Arun Dhumal, IPL Chairman

The event was organised by the cricket association. No one had expected that so many people would come. No one had expected it, neither the cricket association nor the government

-Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

YOUNG LIVES LOST

Divyanshi BS, 14 (Bengaluru)

The young fan, a native of Andhra Pradesh, had travelled to Bengaluru just to catch a glimpse of her favourite cricketer, Virat Kohli. She died of suffocation and a head injury near the stadium's entrance gate.

Shivalinga Swamy, 17 (Yadgir)

The teen from Yadgir was living with his family in Yelahanka. Having just cleared his Class 10 exams, he told his family he was going to collect his TC from school to begin the admission process for PUC.

Poornachandra, 26 (Mandya)

He was resident of Rajasamudra area and was working as a civil engineer at a private company in Mysuru.

Prajwal, 22 (Chintamani)

He had told his family he was heading to Bengaluru for a job interview at a company. But instead, he went to attend the event.

Bhoomik, 19 (Bengaluru)

Chinnaiah Shetty, 19 (Bengaluru)

Manoj Kumar, 20 (Tumakuru)

Sahana, 23 (Kolar)

Shravan KT, 20 (Chikkaballapur)

Kamakshi Devi, 29 (Coimbatore)

Akshata Pai, 26 (Uttara Kannada)

Victim's family made to wait 4 hours to file FIR

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

Family of Divyanshi, a 14-year-old girl, who died in the stampede outside Chinnaswamy stadium, Bengaluru on Wednesday, said they had to wait nearly four hours before an FIR could be filed.

Relatives gathered at the home of the grieving family in Yelahanka as the teen's body was taken for last rites.

Her grieving father, Shivakumar, recounted how his daughter fell after being pushed at Gate Number 15.

"They (officials) came and visited (afterwards), but no proper support was provided. They didn't even give proper first aid. My wife said she was begging for some support. Finally, my daughter was taken in an auto," Shivakumar said.

The girl's body has been taken to Andhra Pradesh for the last rites. He also said the government should take total responsibility.

"Why didn't they make proper arrangements? Go and see

Bereaved mother of Divyanshi, a victim of the stampede mourns at her residence in Bengaluru on Thursday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Mysore Palace Road -- for political events, they arrange everything. For this celebration, they should have had proper planning. Intelligence should have been there," he added.

Meanwhile, the mortal remains of Kamatchi Devi, a 28-year-old software engineer, who died too in the stampede, was taken to her hometown Mayiladumparai in Tiruppur district of Tamil Nadu for the last rites on Thursday.

Devi, who was working in Bengaluru, had gone to the Chinnaswamy Stadium. She was caught in the crowd surge and died. *—PTI*

How big was the crowd? Nobody knows

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

While 11 lives were lost in the Bengaluru stampede, accountability from the government appears to be lacking. Conflicting statements from top officials have only added to the confusion.

On Wednesday, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah claimed that around 3 lakh people had gathered for the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) victory parade. However, a day later, Home Minister G Parameshwara stated that the crowd was closer to 8 lakh. To further complicate matters, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Wednesday that 5,000 police personnel had been deployed to manage the event. Yet, in a submission to the High Court on Thursday, the government admitted that only 1,000 officers were present.

Govt-made stampede: BJP wants CM to quit

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

The BJP on Thursday demanded the resignation of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar, alleging that the "mutual fight and rift" between the two led to the state "government-manufactured stampede".

BJP MP and national spokesperson Sambit Patra alleged that the "mutual fight and rift" between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar led to the state "government-manufactured stampede".

He recalled last year's arrest of Telugu actor Allu Arjun in a stampede case in Telangana, where the Congress is in power, and asked if the party would follow the same rule in Karnataka and arrest its two senior leaders.

He also slammed Rahul Gandhi and asked him to break his silence on the incident, make the chief minister and the deputy chief minister step down.

Shivakumar, meanwhile, turned emotional over the loss of lives due to the stampede near the Chinnaswamy Stadium and said that Bengaluru has lost its image due to the incident.

DyCM DK Shivakumar turned emotional while addressing media

Reacting to allegations by the opposition that police had not given permission for celebrations, he said, " I don't want to react to any of these BJP guys. I am only answerable to the people of Karnataka and people of the country. All BJP persons are nonsense... They are also the mastermind of these dirty things." *—PTI*

"The saddest thing about our excitement and buzz of our population is that we are not good at crowd control. We will have to develop different approaches to control and management

-Shashi Tharoor, Congress leader

Mistake should not be to that scale where you are having fun and you lose lives. In the future, if any team wins, keep it calm. Lives are more important than celebration

-Kapil Dev, Ex-cricketer

CELEBRATING EARTH

Bhoomi Habba returns with focus on climate resilience

Born as a 'Festival of Just Peace', Bhoomi Habba has evolved to address ecological justice ***PHOTO: SALAR***

BENGALURU, 5 JUNE

Visthar's much-loved annual eco-festival, "Bhoomi Habba – The Earth Festival", returns on 7 June 2025, from 10am to 7pm at the Visthar Campus. Celebrated for nearly two decades, the event coincides with World Environment Day and focuses this year on climate resilience and sustainable communities.

"Bhoomi Habba counters the profit-driven view of nature with a vision rooted in love, equity, and justice," said Mercy Kappen, Executive Director, Visthar. The festival will feature performances, workshops, film screenings, exhibitions, and eco-enterprises, all designed to spark reflection and action for a sustainable future.

Highlights include Indian folk music, dance, and storytelling by performers such as Anuradha Venkatraman, Santi Priya, and Mayuri. Workshops will cover seed ball making, eco-art, pottery, handmade paper, and a Moving Tree nature walk. Thought-provoking films like Waste and the City will be followed by expert-led discussions.

The festival also includes the "Soil Exhibition" by Soil Vasu, poster displays on gender and climate, and traditional Indian games. Over 70 stalls will showcase eco-friendly products by collectives like Timbaktu, Black Baza Coffee, and Desi Trust.

Born as a "Festival of Just Peace," Bhoomi Habba has evolved to address ecological justice. With inclusive programming for all ages, it encourages practical learning and community engagement.

Event details:
Date: Saturday, 7 June
Time: 10am – 7pm
Venue: Visthar Campus, off Hennur Main Road, Bengaluru
Entry Fee: Rs 50
Website: www.visthar.org

HAASAN'S FANS FROM BENGALURU GO TO HOSUR TO WATCH 'THUG LIFE'

CHENNAI, 5 JUNE

'Thug Life', the much-anticipated reunion of Kamal Haasan and director Mani Ratnam after nearly four decades, hit theatres on Thursday to a thunderous reception in Tamil Nadu. The gangster drama saw swarms of fans celebrating the First Day First Show (FDFS) with firecrackers, cakes, and dancing outside cinemas. Some fans even poured beer on giant cutouts of Haasan and co-star Silambarasan TR.

With the film not releasing in Karnataka following a linguistic controversy, several fans reportedly travelled from Bengaluru to Hosur, just 42 km away, to catch the screening.

Haasan declined to apologise for his recent comment linking the origin of Kannada to Tamil, leading to backlash from Karnataka leaders and the state's Film Chamber. Despite this, fans continue to show strong support. In Coimbatore, many wore T-shirts with slogans like "Will not apologise) and "We stand with Kamal Haasan." *—PTI*

TMC MP Mahua Moitra married senior Supreme Court advocate and former BJD MP Pinaki Misra, in Germany Misra was the party's face in Delhi ***PHOTO: INSTAGRAM***

Delhi court extends custody of two alleged spies

DELHI, 5 JUNE

A Delhi court on Thursday extended the police custody of two persons arrested for allegedly spying for Pakistan by seven days. Chief Judicial Magistrate Shriya Agrawal extended the custody of Qasim and Haseen after they were produced before court on expiry of their custody granted earlier. She passed the order after police said that further custody was required to unearth an "espionage network" and probe the technical evidence and trail of transactions in their bank accounts. The accused allegedly clicked photos of sensitive locations, including Army camps, and sold it to Pakistan. ***—PTI***

Ahead of Punjab bypoll, Cong calls AAP 'anti-national'

LUDHIANA, 5 JUNE

Bharat Bhushan Ashu, Congress candidate for the upcoming Ludhiana West Assembly bypoll, has lambasted the AAP, accusing it of harbouring an "anti-national" mindset. During a media interaction, Ashu cited Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's recent critiques of Operation Sindoor and previous demands for proof of surgical strikes. He said that these actions reflect a troubling trend in Mann's statements, which he described as both "insensitive and dangerous." Ashu confidently claimed that the citizens of Punjab would not tolerate any anti-national sentiments. ***—PTI***

BSF jawan abducted at B'desh border, released

GUWAHATI, 5 JUNE

A Border Security Force (BSF) jawan was reportedly abducted by Bangladeshi nationals during an attempted infiltration along the international border in West Bengal's Murshidabad district, officials said on Wednesday 4 June, 2025. The incident took place near Chandni Chowk, close to the BSF camp in Sutiar, Nurpur, when the trooper tried to stop infiltrators near Kathalia village. He was captured by miscreants from Chapai Nawabganj district in Bangladesh, according to BSF sources. "He was abducted but released after we raised the matter with the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB). He is safe and back with us," a senior BSF officer from the South Bengal Frontier said. The jawan was handed over following a flag meeting between both border forces. A video, yet to be verified, allegedly showed him tied to a banana tree. ***—PTI***

Putin-Trump discuss India, Pak on call, says Kremlin

Pakistan PM urges the Presidents to assist in resolving conflict

MOSCOW/WASHINGTON/ ISLAMABAD, 5 JUNE

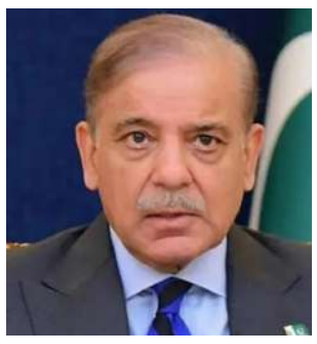
The India and Pakistan conflict figured during a phone call between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump, a Kremlin aide said.

During their conversation on Wednesday, the two discussed Ukraine and touched on some other issues, Kremlin aide Yury Ushakov said.

"They also touched upon the Middle East and the armed conflict between India and Pakistan, which was stopped with the personal participation of President Trump," Ushakov was quoted as saying by Russia's state-run TASS news agency.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged President Putin to assist in resolving the conflict with India, Pakistan PM's special aide Syed Tariq Fatemi said.

Fatemi, who met Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow on Tuesday, handed ,over a letter from Sharif for Putin.



Vladimir Putin, Shehbaz Sharif, Donald Trump ***PHOTO: PTI***

"We asked (Putin) to use his influence to make sure that India and Pakistan sit down at the negotiating table," Fatemi said on Wednesday.

Pak praises Trump

Sharif and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chief Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari also both praised Trump for "de-escalating the tension".

The leaders also talked about renewed bilateral ties with the US and urged Washington to facilitate a dialogue.

Sharif was speaking at the US Embassy in Islamabad while Bhutto-Zardari was speaking with journalists in Washington on Wednesday.

> **(Trump) is a man for peace... and beneficial business deals....Trump is a man against escalation and a man against cold and hot war**
>
> -Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan Prime Minister

Dawn reported that Sharif claimed that the conflict had revealed the "Pahalgam incident was a false-flag operation", and credited Trump for playing a decisive role in ensuring a ceasefire.

Dawn also reported that former foreign minister Bhutto-Zardari, who is leading a Pakistani delegation that began a three-day visit to Washington on Wednesday, said "on 10 different occasions, (Trump) has taken credit for facilitating the ceasefire— and rightly so.... It was his efforts that helped make the ceasefire possible". *—PTI*

TRAVEL PLANNER TO AGENT

Pakistan's 'Madam N' lures influencers into spy sleeper cells

NEW DELHI/LAHORE, 5 JUNE

A travel agent in Lahore allegedly helped Indian social media influencers travel to Pakistan and set the groundwork for using them as spies, sources said.

Working under Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), businesswoman Noshaba Shehzad, who runs the Lahore-based company Jaiyana Travel and Tourism, allegedly helped Indian social media influencers like Jyoti Malhotra - who was arrested recently - and many others to visit Pakistan, sources said.

Operating under the codename 'Madam N', Shehzad allegedly came to light during interrogation of arrested social media influencers in India. She had been working to set up a massive sleeper cell network of at least 500 spies across India, sources added.

She had allegedly introduced Indian social media influencers to the Pakistani Army and the ISI and would lure Hindus and Sikhs living in India. She helped nearly 3,000 citizens from India and 1,500 non-resident Indians (NRIs) visit Pakistan in the last six months, sources added.

—Salar News with Agencies

Travel agent Noshaba Shehzad, or 'Madam N' ***PHOTO: INSTA***

Tharoor rubbishes thought of joining BJP

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said people who "consider working in national interest (as) anti-party activities really need to question themselves", while brushing aside speculations that he would quit the Opposition party.

Tharoor, currently in the US leading a multi-party delegation on Operation Sindoor, has been dubbed as the "super spokesperson of the BJP" by one of his party colleagues.

"Frankly, when one is doing the nation's service, I don't think one needs to worry too much about these things," Tharoor said. "I'm an elected member of parliament. I have four years left of my term. I don't know why there is any question to be asked."

Tharoor led a delegation which met US Vice-President JD Vance.

In a post on X, the Indian Embassy in the US said that the delegation's "conversation

focused on strengthening the India-US partnership including cooperation in counter-terrorism domain,".

Meanwhile, Congress leader Salman Khurshid, also reportedly in hot water after saying is it "so difficult to be patriotic", clarified that it was not directed at his party.

"A patriot will speak the language we spoke abroad. That language was spoken by people of the BJP, by the people of CPI(M), JD(U) and all the people who were there," he said. "My party sent me... why will I tweet about my party, my party sent me. My tweet was for people who do not consider themselves patriotic." *—PTI*

China silent on rare metals export curbs

BEIJING, 5 JUNE

China, which holds the global monopoly over the precious rare earth metals needed for manufacturing of phones, automobiles and missiles, continues to play hardball over lifting export restrictions of the precious metals warding off pressures from a host of countries, including, the US, EU and India.

"China's export control measures are consistent with universal practices," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said.

"Such measures are non-discriminatory and not targeted at any particular country," Jian added.

Reports in recent weeks from India showed growing concerns among the automobile manufactures about scarcity about rare earth magnets, which are critical components in electric vehicles (EVs) and even some parts of traditional internal combustion engine vehicles. *—PTI*

SINDOOR TAKES ROOTS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi planted a 'sindoor' sapling, presented to him by a group of women who had shown remarkable courage during the 1971 war, at his residence on World Environment Day, Thursday. He also extended the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' (a plant in the name of mother) campaign and launched an initiative to reforest the 700km Aravalli mountain range that stretches from Delhi to Gujarat ***PHOTO: X/@narendramodi***

NIA raids 32 locations in J&K

The NIA carried out searches at 32 locations across Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian, Baramulla and Kupwara districts in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The investigations revealed that Pakistan-based operatives are using social media platforms and online apps to facilitate and promote terror, the NIA said.

Pak citizen moves SC over visa

A Pakistani national residing in Goa since 2016 on long-term visa moved the Supreme Court after the Centre revoked Pakistani visas. His counsel listed the matter before a bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Satish Chandra Sharma for urgent listing, who said, "you go back". The counsel said he would, but may be heard given a specific condition in the visa, and he was born in India.

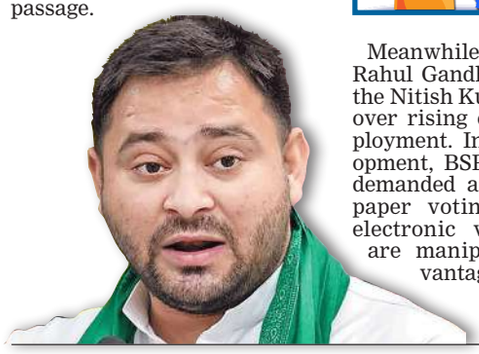
Tejashwi writes to Nitish, demands fresh quota laws

PATNA, 5 JUNE

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav has urged Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to convene a special assembly session to introduce new legislation aimed at increasing reservations for weaker sections of society to 85 per cent. As the Leader of the Opposition, Yadav expressed his concerns via social media, accusing the state government of stalling this important issue.

Yadav, who previously served as deputy CM when quotas were raised to 75 per cent, proposed that the new laws be forwarded to the Centre for inclusion in the Constitution's ninth schedule. He highlighted that the Patna High Court had previously invalidated legislation from 2023 due to a lack of scientific evidence supporting the need for increased quotas.

Citing the example of Tamil Nadu, which maintains a 69 per cent reservation, Yadav contended that Bihar could similarly protect its laws from judicial challenges if they are placed in the ninth schedule. He called for the formation of an "all-party committee" to draft the legislation and subsequently hold a special assembly ses- sion for its passage.



Meanwhile, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also lambasted the Nitish Kumar government over rising crime and unemployment. In a related development, BSP chief Mayawati demanded a return to ballot paper voting, alleging that electronic voting machines are manipulated to disadvantage her party. *—PTI*

INDIA-S AFRICA DISCUSS WATER MANAGEMENT

JOHANNESBURG, 5 JUNE

Indian Consul General in Johannesburg, Mahesh Kumar, praised the partnership between India's Ion Exchange and South African company Safic as a model of international collaboration. Speaking at a two-day symposium hosted by Ion Exchange Safic—a subsidiary of Ion Exchange (India) Ltd—Kumar encouraged Indian companies to prioritise social impact.

Highlighting the shared crisis of water scarcity, Kumar pointed to South Africa's "Day Zero" concerns affecting 11 major cities, and noted similar challenges in India.

He emphasised India's advances in water governance, including reuse, metering, leak detection, and the use of AI for water auditing. *—PTI*

Congress says 'Narender surrendered' to Adani, China

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

The Congress party intensified its criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of "surrendering" to billionaire Gautam Adani and China. Congress leader Ajoy Kumar claimed at a press conference that Modi has capitulated to both Adani's business interests and Chinese incursions into Indian territory.

Kumar likened the Modi-Adani relationship to the legendary duo Jai and Veeru from the film "Sholay", asserting that Modi's diplomatic initiatives have directly benefited Adani's global ventures in ports, airports, and energy sectors. He further alleged that Modi has damaged India's international relationships while promoting Adani's ambitions.

The Congress leader also extended the "Narender-surrender" critique to the Prime Minister's stance on China, calling for an apology for Modi's perceived leniency following China's territorial incursions in 2020.

Kumar noted that China has reaffirmed its support for Pakistan, raising concerns about regional security.

In response to Rahul Gandhi's remarks suggesting Modi obeyed directives from former US President Donald Trump, the BJP condemned the Congress, accusing Gandhi of undermining Indian armed forces. *—PTI*

Thackeray cousins should hold talks on alliance: Amit

MUMBAI, 5 JUNE

Amit Thackeray, a leader of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), emphasised the need for a direct conversation between his cousin Uddhav Thackeray, head of Shiv Sena (UBT), and MNS chief Raj Thackeray regarding a potential alliance. Amit stated, "Two brothers should speak... Alliances do not happen while talking in the media."

Amid speculation of reconciliation two decades after their split, Raj Thackeray suggested uniting for the benefit of Marathi communities, while Uddhav expressed openness to addressing "trivial issues" if it serves Maharashtra's interests. Amit recalled past unsuccessful attempts at alliance in 2014 and 2017, urging the two leaders to communicate directly.

Amit Thackeray ***PHOTO: PTI***

Meanwhile, NCP (SP) MP Supriya Sule dismissed rumours regarding a merger of the rival factions within the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), which are led by her father Sharad Pawar and his estranged nephew Ajit Pawar. Sule clarified that there have been no discussions or proposals for merging, stating, "There is no storm in a teacup." With the NCP's 26th foundation day approaching, speculation persists about its future. *—PTI*

CARRIED RS 40 LAKH BOUNTY

Senior Naxal leader killed in Chhattisgarh

BIJAPUR, 5 JUNE

Senior Maoist leader Narasimha Chalam alias Sudhakar, who had a bounty of Rs 40 lakh on his head, was killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Thursday, police said, days after the elusive chief of CPI (Maoist) was gunned down.

The killing of Sudhakar, a member of the Maoists' Central Committee, comes a fortnight after CPI (Maoist) general secretary Nambala Keshav Rao alias Basavaraju (70) was neutralised by security forces in the Bastar region, dealing a severe blow to the banned outfit.

Originally hailing from Andhra Pradesh, the 67-year-old was involved in indoctrination and radicalisation of youth.

He was also responsible for numerous Naxal attacks in Chhattisgarh, resulting in the death of civilians and security personnel, they said.

The latest exchange of fire broke out in the forest of Indravati national park area when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxalite operation based on inputs about the presence of senior cadres, a senior police official posted in Bastar Range told PTI.

Personnel belonging to the Special Task Force, District Reserve Guard, both units of the Chhattisgarh police, and CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action - an elite unit of CRPF) were involved in the operation that was launched on Wednesday, he said.

Maoist leader Narasimha Chalam ***PHOTO: PTI***

- Originally hailing from Andhra, the 67-year-old was involved in indoctrination and radicalisation of youth. He was also responsible for numerous Naxal attacks in Chhattisgarh

The offensive was launched based on inputs about the presence of Maoist leader Sudhakar, Telangana State Committee member Bandi Prakash, Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) member Pappa Rao, and a few other armed cadres, the official said.

Also known by aliases Anand, Chanti Balakrishna, Ramaraju, Aravind and Somanna, he was a resident of Pragadavaram village in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

Sudhakar, a member of the Maoists' Central Committee, the topmost governing body of the outlawed CPI (Maoist), was also in-charge of RePOS (Revolutionary Political School) and Central Regional Bureau (CRB), he said.

With the latest action, 203 Naxalites have been killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh so far this year. Since January last year, at least 403, Maoists cadres have been killed in Bastar division. *—PTI*

Five members of family die in M'rashtra car crash

NASHIK, 5 JUNE

Six people, including five members of the same family, were killed and one seriously injured when the car they were travelling in crashed into a roadside house in Maharashtra's Nashik district. The accident occurred on 4 June at Kolhapur Phata. The family, from Nampur in Satana, was returning home after attending a relative's wedding in Nashik when the driver lost control of the vehicle, causing it to collide with a bungalow on the Nashik-Kalwan Road. Shaila Vasant Bhadan, 62; her daughter Madhavi Metkar, 32; granddaughter Triveni Metkar, 4; relative Sarla Bhalchandra Bhadan, 50; and the driver, Khaliq Mehmood Pathan, 50 died on the spot. Madhavi's son, who suffered serious injuries, later died in hospital. *—PTI*

PHOTO: REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

Stray dogs maul child to death in Madhya Pradesh

MANDSAUR, 5 JUNE

A four-year-old boy tragically lost his life after being attacked by a pack of stray dogs in the Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh. The incident occurred on Wednesday as Ayush played with friends outside his home on the Suwasra-Runija road, approximately 80 km from the district headquarters. While the other children managed to escape, Ayush was unable to flee and was bitten by the dogs. In response, Mandsaur Collector Aditi Garg has initiated an inquiry into the incident, appointing Sitamau Sub-Divisional Magistrate Shivani Garg to the investigation team. The collector has also proposed financial assistance for the victim's family to the chief minister's office. *—PTI*

Chambal rebel's granddaughter held for assault

JHANSI, 5 JUNE

A junior engineer from the power department was reportedly assaulted by the granddaughter of the late Chambal rebel Paan Singh Tomar during a smart meter installation in Punjabi Colony. The incident occurred on Tuesday when Vaibhav Rawat and his team attempted to replace a meter at the residence of ex-serviceman Shivram Singh Tomar. During the installation, Shivram's daughter, Sapna Tomar, opposed the work and allegedly engaged in a physical altercation with Rawat. The police confirmed that a case has been filed against Sapna under charges of assault and obstructing a public servant. The situation gained further notoriety after a video surfaced, purportedly showing the altercation. *—PTI*

Man stuck in fence while exiting Mumbai train dies

MUMBAI, 5 JUNE

A 27-year-old man died after his neck became ensnared in iron fencing while disembarking from a local train at Mumbai Central station on Thursday. The incident occurred around 9.45am on the Western Railway network. Witnesses reported that the man attempted to exit the train from the wrong side, where the fencing was located. During this, his neck became trapped, leading to severe injuries. Railway police discovered him hanging from the fence, bleeding profusely. Emergency services rushed him to Nair Hospital, but he was declared dead on arrival. Authorities have since commenced a post-mortem examination. This incident serves as a stark reminder of the dangers posed by improper train exits and the importance of adhering to safety protocols at railway stations. *—PTI*

KERALA TOPS AS INDIA'S COVID-19 CASES NEAR 5K

Pre-existing conditions in people aggravate complications

INDORE/KOLKATA/ B'LURU/THANE, 5 JUNE

Medical officials set up beds for patients amid an uptick in coronavirus infections at the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in New Delhi on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

India has reported 4,866 active Covid-19 cases till 5 June, with Kerala recording the maximum number of active cases at 1,487.

Delhi recorded the second highest at 562 active cases, followed by West Bengal with 538 active cases.

Health officials claimed that people with pre-existing conditions are highly vulnerable to develop complications if they incur Covid-19

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 103 cases were recorded in Rajasthan, 526 in Maharashtra, 508 in Gujarat, 436 in Karnataka, 213 in Tamil Nadu, 198 in Uttar Pradesh, 63 in Haryana, 31 in Bihar, 30 in Madhya Pradesh, 18 in Odisha, 16 in Punjab, 50 Andhra Pradesh, three in Telangana, eight each in Jharkhand, Assam and Goa, 19 in Chhattisgarh, six in Uttarakhand, nine in Sikkim, five in Jammu and Kashmir, two in Chandigarh, 17 in Puducherry and one Himachal Pradesh. Seven other have reported zero active cases.

Three woman and four men have tested positive to Covid-19 in Madhya Pradesh's Indore district, taking the number of active cases to 17.

Three of them recently travelled to Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Kerala. They are undergoing treatment in home isolation at present.

An elderly woman, who died in April after being detected with the virus suffered from severe kidney problems.

West Bengal reported over 106 new Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the number of active cases in the state to 538.

The death toll remained at one. Thane on Wednesday reported four new cases of Covid-19, bringing the total number of infections in the city to 130.

The disease claimed one life in the city.

While 12 patients remain hospitalised, 25 patients are undergoing treatment under home quarantine. *—PTI/Agencies*

School children wade through floodwater on a submerged road in Morigaon district of Assam on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

Arunachal's flood situation grim, over 33,000 affected

ITANAGAR/GUWAHATI/ GANGTOK/IMPHAL, 5 JUNE

The flood situation in Arunachal Pradesh remained grim on Thursday as incessant rainfall continued, affecting 33,200 people in 24 districts. 12 people lost their lives due to landslides and floods, while search operations are underway for a missing person. Most of the major rivers and their tributaries are in high spate, but flowing below the normal level.

Livestock were killed and houses were damaged. Bridges and roads were damaged in different districts, affecting connectivity.

The fatalities due to landslides and floods were reported from East Kameng, Lower Subansiri, Longding, Lohit, and Anjaw districts.

Changlang is the worst-affected district.

.Around 17 hectares of farmland and 20 hectares of horticulture plantations.

In the Itanagar Capital Region, landslides damaged pipelines in the Poma water supply project, triggering a drinking water crisis among the capital denizens.

A total of 2,292 people have been evacuated so far.

Assam

Assam's flood situation remained grim, with nearly seven lakh people affected in 21 districts.

The death toll rose to 19, with two deaths reported on 4 June, while another went missing in the Cachar district.

Nine major rivers were flowing above the danger level across the state.

1,494 villages in 66 revenue circles have been affected, with 14977.99 hectares of crop area under water. 41,317 inmates have taken shelter in 403 relief camps.

Sikkim

59 tourists were brought back to Gangtok from the rain-ravaged north Sikkim on Thursday morning.

They were among the 109 tourists stranded in north Sikkim's Lachung for nearly a week.

They were accommodated in hotels and at the Chaten military camp. *—PTI*

SPIRITUAL MOMENTS

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath attends the consecration ceremony of Shri Ram Darbar and idols of deities at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya on Thursday; priests and devotees take part in 'parikrama' rituals as part of the Pran Pratishtha Anushthan at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir premises **PHOTO: PTI**

MEDHA BARRED FROM ODISHA MINING SITE

BHUBANESWAR, 5 JUNE

Social activist Medha Patkar was on Thursday morning not allowed to enter Odisha's Rayagada district, which has been witnessing protests over bauxite mining.

As soon as Patkar arrived at the Rayagada railway station early in the morning, she was served an order, prohibiting her entry to the district for a period of two months from 4 June.

The restriction is imposed on about two dozen activists, including the 'Narmada Bachao' leader.

"...there is a reasonable apprehension that their movement and presence in Rayagada district may lead to deterioration of law and order, disturb public peace and hinder the smooth conduct of administration affairs and development process in the district," said the order, signed by district collector Parul Patawari. *—PTI*

Arunachal plans crackdown on Bangladeshi immigrants

ITANAGAR, 5 JUNE

The Arunachal Pradesh government has launched a statewide crackdown to detect and deport illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, an official said on Thursday.

Acting on directives issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the state has instructed all districts to immediately constitute district task forces (DTFs) to identify undocumented immigrants and ensure strict enforcement of Inner Line Permit (ILP) provisions.

Mutchu Mithi **PHOTO: ANI**

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by advisor to home minister Mutchu Mithi and DGP Anand Mohan on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by senior police officers, including inspector generals and superintendents of police.

"Statewide crackdown on illegal Bangladeshi immigrants and ILP violations. A district task force will be immediately constituted in every district to carry out detection of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants and ensure strict enforcement of the Inner Line Permit regime," Mithi said. *—PTI*

12 clash over Telangana ethanol plant, arrested

HYDERABAD, 5 JUNE

Twelve people were arrested after a protest turned violent at the proposed site of a grain-based ethanol plant in Jogulamba Gadwal district, police said on Thursday.

On Wednesday, villagers from seven to eight nearby villages gathered near Pedda Dhanwada in Rajoli mandal, demanding the government revoke permission for the project. The protesters reportedly set fire to temporary shelters and a container placed by the company at the site.

TV footage showed some protesters overturning a four-wheeler and attacking it with sticks, while stones were also thrown. An earth mover's window was damaged. Police intervened and dispersed the crowd.

Following a complaint by the company, a case was filed at Rajoli police station, charging those involved with arson and rioting. The company also alleged that some of its workers were attacked during the protest. The arrested individuals were remanded to judicial custody on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANI

The company obtained a licence to set up the ethanol plant on 35-40 acres near Pedda Dhanwada about a year ago. Despite discussions with villagers, opposition persists due to fears the plant could harm agricultural land and emit foul gases, potentially spoiling the area with chemicals. *—PTI*

SC slams delay in solving landlord–tenant disputes

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

The Supreme Court has raised serious concerns over the delays in resolving disputes between property owners and tenants, while hearing a case originating from the Bombay High Court. A bench comprising Justices Sanjay Karol and Manoj Misra urged the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court to review the backlog of such cases.

The case in question involved a dispute over the "per square foot rate" used to calculate mesne profit—a sum owed to a rightful property owner when someone wrongfully occupies their property. This particular matter concerned Hindustan Organic Chemicals Ltd's tenancy of Mumbai's Harchandrai House.

The court highlighted the hardships caused by prolonged delays. Landlords suffer either from being deprived of their property or from unpaid dues, while tenants face the sudden burden of paying large sums once cases are finally resolved. The bench emphasised the courts' duty to ensure that neither party is made to suffer due to judicial delays.

The Supreme Court requested the Bombay High Court to obtain reports on the pendency of landlord-tenant disputes and, if necessary, take appropriate steps to expedite their disposal. *—PTI*

INMATE KILLED IN DELHI COURT LOCK UP

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

A man who was brought to Saket court in Delhi for a hearing on Thursday was strangled to death inside the court's lock-up by two other prisoners, police said.

Aman, 24, who was facing trial in an attempt to murder case, was rushed to the hospital but was declared dead by doctors, they said.

Multiple undertrial prisoners were in the lock-up when Aman was attacked by Jitender alias Jitte and Jaidev alias Baccha, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ankit Chauhan in a statement said.

"Aman was brought to the Saket court for production when the incident occurred in Kharja No 5 of the lock-up," the DCP said. *—PTI*

No Aadhaar, No tatkal

The Railway Ministry is planning to make e-Aadhaar authentication mandatory for Tatkal ticketing in order to prevent malpractices. Here are the details:

Why the change?

- To prevent scalping.
- Eliminate bots and automated ticket hoarding.

Features

- Aadhaar verification may soon be mandatory for offline Tatkal bookings too.
- Link your Aadhaar with IRCTC account for priority access.
- Aadhaar-linked users get exclusive access in the first 10 minutes of Tatkal sales. Agents & unverified users blocked during this time.
- Unverified users must wait 3 days post-registration before booking Tatkal or Premium Tatkal tickets.
- Aadhaar-linked IRCTC account can book 24 tickets a month.

IRCTC's anti-bot & fraud measures

- 24 million users blocked in past 6 months for suspicious activity.
- Around 2 million accounts flagged for investigation.
- AI tools actively detect & remove bot logins.

3 ARRESTED

BJP leader lets partner, aide rape teen daughter

HARIDWAR, 5 JUNE

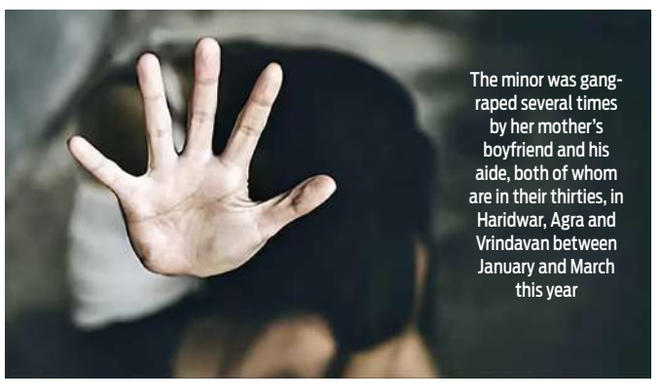
A local BJP leader allegedly let her boyfriend and his aide rape her 13-year-old daughter, the police said on Thursday, adding that all three have been arrested.

The trio has been booked under different sections of the POCSO Act and the BNS, including gang-rape.

Anamika Sharma and her boyfriend Sumit Patwal were arrested from a hotel in Haridwar on 4 June after a medical examination of the girl confirmed that she was sexually assaulted.

Patwal's accomplice Shubham was also arrested from Shahpur in Meerut.

The matter came to light on 3 June when the minor told her father about her ordeal, following which he lodged a police complaint.



The minor was gang-raped several times by her mother's boyfriend and his aide, both of whom are in their thirties, in Haridwar, Agra and Vrindavan between January and March this year

A case was registered against the trio under BNS Sections 70 (2) (gang-rape), 351(3) (criminal intimidation), 3(5) (criminal act) by several persons in furtherance of common intention) and relevant sections of the POCSO Act.

Anamika formerly headed the BJP Mahila Morcha's Haridwar district unit. However, once her name cropped up in the case, she was stripped of the party's primary membership.

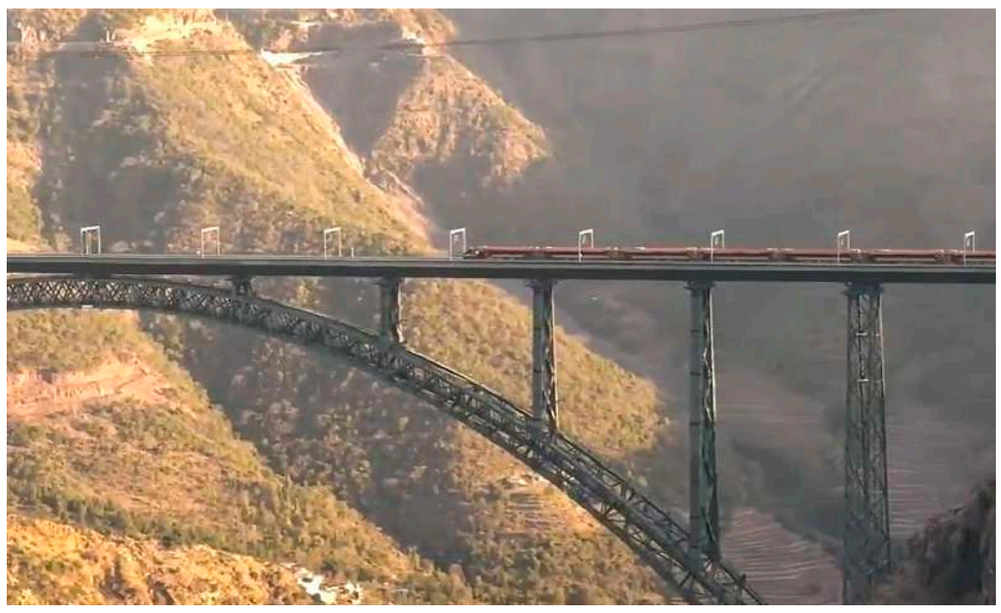
BJP sources here claim that she has not held any party post since August 2024.

The minor was gang-raped several times by her mother's boyfriend and his aide, both of whom are in their thirties, in Haridwar, Agra and Vrindavan between January and March this year.

The men perpetrated the crime with her mother's consent and in her presence, the police said, adding that they also threatened to kill the minor's father if she disclosed it to anyone.

Anamika had separated from her husband and was living with her boyfriend in his hotel, while her daughter lived with her father. *—PTI*

POLAR EXPRESS



A Vande Bharat Express train runs on the Chenab Rail Bridge, in Jammu & Kashmir. Vande Bharat trains on this route are specially designed with anti-freezing technology to prevent freezing of water and bio-toilets in extreme cold. The 272-km Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, constructed at around Rs 43,780 crore, includes 36 tunnels (spanning 119km) and 943 bridges. Notably, the Anji Bridge is India's first cable-stayed rail bridge. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the project today
PHOTO: PTI

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Why women are first to suffer in a warming world

Saplings being distributed to school students on World Environment Day, in Kozhikode, Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

On World Environment Day 2025, as governments and corporations tout green pledges, a quieter truth demands attention: Women across the globe — and particularly in climate-vulnerable countries like India — are bearing the brunt of the crisis.

A growing body of research has highlighted that women disproportionately bear the brunt of its devastating impacts. From heatwaves and floods to air thick with pollution, the effects of environmental degradation fall hardest on women, compounding longstanding inequalities, deepening economic precarity and fuelling a shadow crisis of gender-based violence.

Globally, studies consistently show that natural disasters, often result in higher mortality rates among women, who are also more susceptible to injuries. This vulnerability stems from long standing gender inequalities that limit their access to crucial information, mobility and resources. Traditional caregiver roles can delay women's personal evacuation as they prioritise the safety of children and the elderly, while disruptions to essential services like water and sanitation amplify their already heavy domestic burden.

The documented increase in gender-based violence, including sexual violence and harassment, in the wake of disasters is an alarming trend. Research has indicated a direct link between extreme weather events and spikes in early marriage, for instance. Economic instability, resource scarcity and the breakdown of social structures exacerbate existing power imbalances, making women and girls more vulnerable to exploitation.

Beyond acute events, climate change acts as a "threat multiplier", intensifying food and water insecurity, increasing displacement risks and adding to women's caregiving responsibilities. Their often limited access to land ownership, credit and participation in climate-related decision-making bodies further hinders their ability to adapt effectively.

In India, a nation highly vulnerable to climate change, extreme weather events are increasingly frequent and intense, with women facing severe consequences. In rural areas, where women are often responsible for collection, heatwaves and droughts lead to longer, more arduous journeys to distant water sources, increasing their exposure to extreme heat and the risk of heatstroke.

Floods, intensified by climate change, create conditions conducive to waterborne diseases and pose significant challenges for women's sanitation and menstrual hygiene.

Concerningly, research in India has established a link between drought conditions and increase in intimate partner violence (IPV), with similar associations found for cyclones and emotional IPV. The economic shocks from crop failures and resource scarcity can lead to increased deprivation and conflict within households, manifesting as violence against women.

Furthermore, the "feminisation of agriculture" sees an increasing number of women taking on farming responsibilities due to male out-migration. Despite their growing role, women farmers often lack secure land ownership rights, access to crucial credit and essential agricultural resources, making them particularly susceptible to climate-related losses.

Similarly, traditional gender roles globally often dictate that women are primarily responsible for household chores like cooking and heating, frequently involving the use of solid fuels like wood and coal. This leads to much higher levels of exposure to household air pollution for women compared to men. The WHO said that in poorly ventilated dwellings, indoor smoke can reach levels of fine particulate matter hundreds of times higher than acceptable.

Exposure to air pollution has been consistently linked to an increased risk of various maternal health complications, including stillbirth, miscarriage and preterm birth. Emerging evidence also points towards a connection between air pollution exposure and an elevated risk of hypertension and other chronic diseases in women.

Indian women face a dual burden, exposed to both high levels of indoor air pollution from traditional cooking practices and alarmingly high levels of ambient air pollution in cities and rural areas. This combined exposure contributes to a range of adverse health outcomes, including respiratory illnesses like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Maternal exposure to high levels of air pollution during pregnancy is also linked to low birth weight and impaired lung development in newborns.

Physiological differences also play a role, with pregnancy creating vulnerabilities to pollutants.

Additionally, an intersectional approach is vital, recognising that women's experiences are shaped by socioeconomic status, caste, ethnicity and other identities, leading to compounded disadvantages for marginalised groups.

Therefore, addressing this requires gender-sensitive climate policies that ensure women's meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels of governance.

—Down to Earth

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساڈہ

Indian HNIs struggle to meet financial goals

Despite India's booming economy and a strong bull run in the markets, a large number of High Net-Worth Individuals (HNIs) in India are falling short of achieving their financial goals.

The "India Wealth Survey 2025," conducted by Marcellus Investment and Dun & Bradstreet, revealed a worrying picture of limited savings, heavy debt burdens, and lack of financial planning among wealthy individuals.

The report said, "In spite of a record-breaking bull run, Indian HNIs remain frustrated by their limited success".

As per the survey report, one of the key takeaways is that many HNIs, despite high incomes, are not saving enough.

About 43 per cent of HNIs are saving less than 20 per cent of their post-tax income, and the issue is worse among those aged between 30 to 45, half of whom fall into this category.

Additionally, 4 out of 10 HNIs reported having at least one active loan, and among the younger group (30-45 years), 50 per cent are burdened with loans. This financial stress is limiting their ability to plan for major life goals like retirement, children's education, or home purchases.

The report showed that HNIs have high aspirations, 75 per cent aim to fund their children's education and marriage, 40 per cent wish to buy a house or start a business, and many desire early retirement. However, only a few have a structured financial plan in place.

It also highlighted that real estate continues to dominate asset allocation, with over half of HNIs having more than 20 per cent of their wealth in property (excluding their primary residence), while only a third have the same proportion in equities.

A significant 14 per cent do not maintain any emergency fund, and nearly a quarter are not familiar with global investing.

While 87 per cent of HNIs depend on external financial advisors, a worrying two-thirds of them are unhappy with the advice they receive.

Many complain that advisors push products for commissions, don't offer personalised advice, and fail to explain the rationale behind investment choices.

The report stated, "The advisor doesn't fully understand my needs, and their recommendations are not tailored to my unique situation."

Encouragingly, 82 per cent of HNIs believe that professional financial planning can help them better achieve their goals. They seek advisors who can offer personalised asset allocation based on their specific goals and risk tolerance, assist with planning major life events, and provide unbiased and transparent advice.

To address these issues, the report proposed a three-step solution, free personalised goal planning and asset allocation, access to diversified portfolios (including global equities), and continuous handholding and support throughout the investment journey.

The survey, which covered 465 respondents across metro, Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities, focused on individuals over the age of 30 with post-tax incomes above Rs 20 lakh annually. It painted a clear picture: HNIs in India need to save more, diversify better, and seek reliable, personalised financial advice to turn their aspirations into achievable goals.

—ANI

WHO ARE HNIS?

High Net-worth Individuals (HNIs) are individuals with liquid assets of than Rs 5 crore, typically excluding assets like residences or personal use items. SEBI, in the IPO application category, defines anyone investing an amount over Rs 2 lakh as an HNI.

HNIs are highly sought after by private wealth managers because it is viewed as difficult preserve and maintain such assets.

The more liquid assets held by an individual, the more appealing an HNI becomes to wealth managers, given they earn money equal to a percentage of the total assets they manage.

About 43 per cent of HNIs are saving less than 20 per cent of their post-tax income ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

A J&K town is undergoing a purple revolution cultivating lavender

A six-hour drive from Jammu leads to the quiet hilly town of Bhaderwah, which is blanketed in purple this time of year, thanks to the sea of lavender spread across the town, giving a new identity to the place.

From using lavender in traditional Dogri embroidery to making essential oils, beauty products and food syrups infused with this flowering plant, Bhaderwah, once known for its maize fields, is embracing lavender to bring about an economic transformation to their small town.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh, who inaugurated the Lavender Festival 2025 in Bhaderwah, called the town the Lavender Capital of India and the birthplace of the country's 'Purple Revolution'.

The Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), under CSIR, introduced the aromatic flower to the temperate areas of Jammu through the Aroma Mission, following earlier trials in Kashmir in the 1980s and 1990s.

The seeds were first planted in 2017 when farmers in Bhaderwah, the small town in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, decided to experiment with lavender, a crop previously unheard of in the region, CSIR-IIIM Director Zabeer Ahmad said.

Many farmers gave up traditional crops like paddy and maize, which were being increasingly destroyed by monkeys and other animals.

"Back then, monkeys used to destroy our maize crops. The lavender's strong scent keeps them away," Ahmad said.

Arjun Raina, founder of Ridayu Botanics and CEO of Girdharilal Holistics (Kisan Udyami), said that he started lavender farming with his grandfather Girdharilal in 2017 when he was just in Class 10.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, when demand for natural and medicinal products surged, the idea took shape.

"Last year, I began focusing on value addition and started making more from this flower rather than just growing it. We developed products like soaps, bath salts, shampoos, and food syrups for coffee lattes, mocktails, and cocktails," he said.

Singh, who represents the Udhampur Parliamentary constituency, which also covers Doda, said, "Lavender has not just added fragrance to these mountains, it has added identity, income, and inspiration."

He noted that young entrepreneurs are now earning an average of Rs 65 lakh annually through value-added lavender products.

"What started as a risk has grown into a revolution, often called the Purple Revolution," Singh said.

Lavender breathed a new lease of life into the town, with many who migrated elsewhere returning to their homes

PHOTO: ANI

Singh also credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat address, where the lavender mission was highlighted, for putting Bhaderwah on the national map.

Highlighting how the lavender culture has brought new opportunities for the people in the town, Singh pointed out that farming was no longer the only option for a lot of people here.

"This small town, once known for the migration of its youth, is now seeing many return, as the initiative has become a hub of employment, especially for women," he said.

The government has provided free lavender saplings, oil distillation units, and end-to-end support from cultivation to marketing, bringing about a transformation in the lives of the locals here.

Fatima, a 39-year-old farmer, shared, "I belong to a family where everyone is into farming."

She recalled their initial apprehension, saying, "When he first decided to take up (lavender farming), we were scared because we had no idea how it would turn out. But now, while my husband handles the farming, I create candles and incense sticks using lavender oil."

She noted that lavender is gradually becoming an integral part of Bhaderwah's cultural heritage.

"Just like Dogri traditions where makhmali (velvet) was used in traditional embroidery, lavender is now being imprinted in designs and even incorporated into traditional khadi," she said.

The unconventional farming of aromatic plants has helped them become 'atmanirbhar', farmers of Doda district, who are growing lavender under the Union government's Aroma Mission, said.

Families in the region are ecstatic with their youth returning home from cities, drawn by the potential of this new crop, officials said. The younger generation is not only assisting on the farms but also bringing fresh ideas and exploring innovative ways to add value to the lavender-based products.

Lavender was introduced to the temperate regions of the Jammu division by IIIM under the CSIR-Aroma Mission. The institute initially tried to popularise it in Doda, Kishtwar, and Rajouri districts.

Singh noted that things have changed for the better, as the new generation and entrepreneurs are happily working in lavender fields. "This not only provides them with a chance to multiply their income but also helps them generate employment for others."

The minister further pointed out how the government is providing complete assistance, including funding, technology and marketing, to the farmers associated with lavender so they do not face any problems at any stage.

The CSIR-Aroma Mission has been instrumental in promoting lavender cultivation in the temperate regions of Jammu and Kashmir. Its primary goal is to increase the income of small and marginal farmers and support the growth of agriculture-based startups, officials added.

—PTI

9 injured as violent turbulence hits flight in Germany

BERLIN, 5 JUNE

A Ryanair flight from Berlin to Milan was forced to make an emergency landing in Memmingen, Bavaria, on Wednesday night after violent turbulence injured nine people. The aircraft, carrying 179 passengers and six crew, hit severe weather around 8:30 p.m. Eight passengers and one crew member were hurt; three were hospitalised while others received outpatient treatment. All passengers were assessed by emergency services. The plane was grounded, and passengers were transported to Milan by bus. Severe storms also struck Ulm in Baden-Württemberg, where strong winds tore roofs from homes, likely due to a small tornado. No injuries were reported. —*Agencies*

NZ Parliament suspends 3 over haka protest

WELLINGTON, 5 JUNE

New Zealand Parliament has imposed record suspensions on three Mori Party lawmakers for performing a haka protest during a vote on a controversial bill last November. Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke was banned for seven days, while party co-leaders Debbie Ngarewa-Packer and Rawiri Waititi received 21-day suspensions — the longest in the country's history. The haka was staged to oppose a bill seen as threatening Indigenous rights by altering the Treaty of Waitangi. A parliamentary committee ruled the punishment was for crossing the chamber towards opponents, deemed intimidating, not for the haka itself. Maipi-Clarke rejected the claim, questioning whether their treatment was harsher because they are Mori. The suspensions passed with government support despite opposition objections.—*PTI*

Trump bans visas for new foreign students at Harvard

Says foreign students would jeopardise national security

WASHINGTON, 5 JUNE

US President Donald Trump is moving to block nearly all foreign students from entering the country to attend Harvard University, his latest attempt to choke the Ivy League school from an international pipeline that accounts for a quarter of the student body.

In an executive order signed on Wednesday, Trump declared that it would jeopardise national security to allow Harvard to continue hosting foreign students on its campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"I have determined that the entry of the class of foreign nationals described above is detrimental to the interests of the United States because, in my judgment, Harvard's conduct has rendered it an unsuitable destination for foreign students and researchers," Trump wrote in the order.

It's a further escalation in the White House's fight with the nation's oldest and wealthiest university. A federal court in Boston blocked the Department of Homeland Security from barring international students at Harvard last week. Trump's order invokes a different legal authority.

Trump invoked a broad federal law that gives the president authority to block foreigners whose entry would be "detrimental to the interests of the United States." The order cites several other laws, too, including one barring foreigners associated with terrorist organizations.

In a statement Wednesday night, Harvard said it will "continue to protect its international students."

"This is yet another illegal retaliatory step taken by the Administration in violation of Harvard's First Amendment rights," university officials said.

It stems from Harvard's refusal to submit to a series of demands made by the federal government. It has escalated recently after the Department of Homeland Security said Harvard refused to provide records related to misconduct by foreign students.

Harvard says it has complied with the request, but the government said the school's response was insufficient. —*PTI*

Trump bans 12 nations, exempts China, Russia

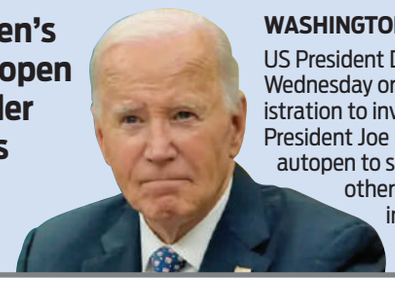
On Wednesday, Trump cited the same authority when announcing that citizens of 12 countries would be banned from visiting the US and those from seven others would face restrictions. However, the citizens of China and Russia, the two countries which threaten the US hegemony in technology and military power, have free access to America.

Musk stops $100M promised to Trump

WASHINGTON, 5 JUNE

Us President Donald Trump's billionaire friend Elon Musk has withheld the final USD 100 million of a USD 300 million commitment he had made to support his re-election efforts, signalling a deepening rift. The Wall Street Journal said the missing funds and escalating tensions have left Trump's campaign team in a lurch. Musk's decision comes amid growing frustration over Trump's administration and key policy decisions. The Wall Street Journal quoted Trump advisers as saying that the last instalment of Musk's promised was not paid. —*PTI*

Biden's autopen under lens



WASHINGTON, 5 JUNE

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday ordered his administration to investigate former President Joe Biden's use of an autopen to sign pardons and other documents, increasing the pressure on his predecessor as House Republicans also requested interviews with members of Biden's inner circle.

An autopen is a device that is used to replicate a person's authentic signature. "This conspiracy marks one of the most dangerous and concerning scandals in American history," Trump wrote in a memo. "The American public was purposefully shielded from discovering who wielded the executive power, all while Biden's signature was deployed across thousands of documents to effect radical policy shifts." —*PTI*

Russians attacked Pryluky in Chernihiv region of Ukraine with drones on Wednesday night, killing five people ***PHOTO: X @ZMIST_UA***

Russian strike kills 5 people in Ukraine

- The attack came hours after Trump spoke by phone with Russia's Putin. According to Trump, Putin said "very strongly" that Russia will retaliate for Ukraine's weekend drone attacks

KYIV/ SEOUL, 5 JUNE

At least five people were killed in a Russian drone strike that hit the northern Ukrainian city of Pryluky on Wednesday night, officials said. Six drones hit a residential area in the city.

"One of the rescuers arrived to respond to the aftermath right at his own home," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram. "It turned out that a Shahed drone hit his house."

The attack came just hours after Donald Trump spoke by phone with Russian President Vladimir Putin. According to Trump, Putin said "very strongly" that Russia will retaliate for Ukraine's weekend stunning drone attacks on Russian military airfields.

Six people wounded in the Pryluky attack are in hospital, officials said.

KIM BACKS RUSSIA

Meanwhile, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un told a visiting top Russian official that his country will "unconditionally support" Russia's war against Ukraine, the North's state media reported Thursday.

In a meeting with Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu in Pyongyang on Wednesday, Kim affirmed that North Korea will "unconditionally support the stand of Russia and its foreign policies in all the crucial international political issues including the Ukrainian issue," the official Korean Central News Agency said.

In April, the two countries officially confirmed North Korean troops' deployment to Russia for the first time, saying that soldiers of the two countries were fighting alongside each other to repel a Ukrainian incursion into Russia's Kursk border region. At the time, Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked North Korea's participation in the war. —*PTI*

6 of 11 kidnapped employees rescued in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, 5 JUNE

Eleven employees of a private company were abducted by unidentified militants near Domanda Bridge in Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on Thursday, officials said. Police teams, led by District Police Officer and Counter Terrorism Department officials, swiftly launched a search operation and rescued six hostages. Efforts are ongoing to recover the remaining five and apprehend the suspects. The abducted employees were travelling in three vehicles from Islamabad to Quetta when they were intercepted. In a separate incident, locals in Tirah Valley, near the Afghan border, foiled an attempted abduction of a Pakistan Army soldier. —*Agencies*

Pop singer Jessie J diagnosed with breast cancer

NEW YORK, 5 JUNE 2025

British pop singer Jessie J has revealed she has been diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer and will undergo surgery following her performance at Capital's Summertime Ball on 15 June. The 37-year-old artist shared the news in an emotional Instagram video on Wednesday, saying: "Cancer sucks in any form, but I'm holding onto the word 'early'." She added, with humour, "It's a very dramatic way to get a boob job." Jessie J explained she wanted to be open about her diagnosis to help herself process it and to connect with others facing similar struggles. "I'm an open book," she said, acknowledging the support she has received from fans in the past. Known for her powerful vocals and hits like Bang Bang and Domino, the Grammy-nominated singer has released five albums, most recently This Christmas Day in 2018. —*PTI*

Palestinian envoy Riyad Mansour said the General Assembly would vote on a similar measure next week ***PHOTO: X@UN_NEWS_CENTRE***

US vetoes UNSC resolution demanding Gaza ceasefire

UNITED NATIONS/ TEL AVIV, 5

The United States has vetoed a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, arguing it lacked key conditions, including the release of hostages. The resolution, backed by 14 other members, cited Gaza's "catastrophic" humanitarian situation and urged Israel to lift aid restrictions.

Acting US Ambassador Dorothy Shea said the resolution would undermine Israel's security and ongoing diplomatic efforts, while failing to condemn Hamas' 7 October, 2023, attack or demand its disarmament. China's UN envoy said Israeli actions "crossed every red line" of humanitarian law, while the UK called Israel's blockade "unjustifiable" and "disproportionate."

Slovenia, speaking for the 10 elected members, stressed the resolution aimed only to ease suffering. Pakistan condemned the veto as "complicity."

Palestinian envoy Riyad Mansour said the General Assembly would vote on a similar measure next week.

Meanwhile, Israel announced it had recovered the bodies of two hostages, Judih Weinstein and Gad Haggai, taken during Hamas' 7 October assault. —*PTI*

Israel to stop boat-load of aid to Gaza

Israel has declared that it is "prepared" to block the arrival of boat Greta Thunberg in Gaza with a load of humanitarian aid, said a senior military spokesperson. "For this case as well, we are prepared," Israel Defence Forces spokesman Brig General Effie Defrin told The Times of London. —*Agencies*

S Korea passes bills to probe Yoon further

SEOUL, 5 JUNE

South Korea's Liberal-controlled legislature on Thursday passed bills authorising special investigations into ousted President Yoon Suk Yeol's brief imposition of martial law and criminal allegations against his wife, a day after liberal President Lee Jae-myung took office.

Yoon Suk Yeol

The bills, previously vetoed by Yoon and a caretaker government, were approved by a vote of 194 to 3. President Lee, who led efforts to impeach Yoon in December over the martial law incident, is expected to sign them. Dozens of retired marines cheered the outcome from the observation gallery.

Yoon was indicted in January on rebellion charges for his 3 December decree, which prosecutors say was an illegal attempt to seize control of the legislature and election offices.

The decree was revoked within hours after lawmakers overcame a military blockade to vote it down.

Liberals argue that independent investigations are essential due to Yoon's non-cooperation and the limitations of existing probes. The special prosecutors may oversee or expand ongoing investigations.

Yoon's wife, Kim Keon Hee, faces corruption allegations, including receiving gifts from a Unification Church official and alleged involvement in stock manipulation and election interference.

Yoon had repeatedly dismissed calls for investigations as politically motivated attacks. —*PTI*

China issues warrants for Taiwanese hackers

TAIPEI, 5 JUNE

China has issued arrest warrants for 20 Taiwanese nationals accused of hacking activities in the mainland on behalf of Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and has banned all business dealings with a Taiwan-based company linked to pro-independence activism. —*PTI*

PAK APPROVES ₹4,224 CRORE BUDGET FOR FY25

ISLAMABAD, 5 JUNE

Pakistan's National Economic Council (NEC), chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has approved a Rs 4,224 crore national development budget for FY 2025-26, alongside a GDP growth target of 4.2 per cent. The current fiscal year's growth is projected at 2.7 per cent.

The NEC also endorsed Pakistan's 13th Five-Year Development Plan and the Uraan Pakistan framework aimed at accelerating economic growth. Priority sectors include health, education, infrastructure, water, and housing. Macroeconomic targets and a collaborative implementation strategy with provinces and ministries were also finalised.

Remittances rose 30.9 per cent from July 2024 to April 2025, and for the first time, the current account balance remained positive. Private sector development loans reached Rs 681 billion, while the policy rate dropped to 11 per cent.

During the meeting, Sharif criticised India's abeyance of the Indus Waters Treaty following the 22 April Pahalgam terror attack, calling Indian threats to water access "unacceptable." —*PTI*

POPULATION CRISIS

Japan's birth rate hits record low

TOKYO, 5 JUNE

Japan recorded just 6,86,061 births in 2024, a 5.7 per centdecline from the previous year and the lowest number since records began in 1899, according to the Health Ministry. It marks the 16th consecutive annual drop, with births now at just a quarter of the post-war peak of 2.7 million in 1949.

The country's fertility rate also hit a new low of 1.15, down from 1.2 in 2023. Despite a slight rise in marriages to 485,063, the long-term trend of declining unions continues.

Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba has called the demographic crisis a "silent emergency," pledging workplace reforms and family support measures, particularly in rural areas. However, experts say government efforts remain too focused on already married couples and fail to address deeper social issues.

The country's fertility rate also hit a new low of **1.15,** down from 1.2 in 2023

Many Japanese are increasingly hesitant to marry or have children due to poor job prospects, high living costs and a corporate culture that disproportionately burdens women. Social expectations, including the legal requirement for couples to adopt a single surname, also deter marriage.

Japan's population of 124 million is projected to shrink to 87 million by 2070, with 40 per cent over the age of 65 — raising major concerns about economic sustainability and national security.

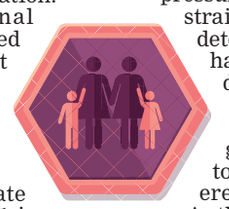
Similar demographic crises are unfolding across East Asia. South Korea and China face plummeting birth rates, while Vietnam on Wednesday scrapped its two-child policy to counter the trend. —*PTI*

VIETNAM SCRAPS TWO-CHILD POLICY

HANOI, 5 JUNE

Vietnam has officially scrapped its decades-old two-child policy in a bid to reverse declining birth rates and ease the strain of an ageing population.

The National Assembly passed the amendment Tuesday, ending restrictions that were stricter for Communist Party members.



The birth rate dropped from 2.11 in 2021 to 1.91 in 2024, with Ho Chi Minh City reporting just 1.39 — far below replacement levels. Experts warn Vietnam's population may begin shrinking by 2054, threatening economic growth as the working-age population peaks in 2042.

Despite generous benefits such as six months of paid maternity leave and free schooling, financial pressures and time constraints continue to deter families from having more children.

Vietnam also faces a skewed gender ratio due to a cultural preference for sons. Authorities plan to triple fines for sex-selective practices to curb the trend.

Vietnam follows China, which eased its one-child policy in 2021, but with limited success. —*PTI*

Markets climb for 2nd day on fresh foreign fund flow

Eternal jumps 4.5 per cent while IndusInd, Axis Bank drop

MUMBAI, 5 JUNE

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty ended higher on Thursday, driven by buying in blue-chip stocks ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries amid fresh foreign fund inflows and firm global market trends.

Rising for the second straight day, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 443.79 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 81,442.04. During the day, it jumped 912.88 points or 1.12 per cent to 81,911.13. The NSE Nifty rose 130.70 points or 0.53 per cent to 24,750.90.

Eternal was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, jumping 4.50 per cent, followed by Power Grid, ICICI Bank, Reliance Industries, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports, Sun Pharma, ITC and Hindustan Unilever were also among the winners.

In contrast, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned buyers on Wednesday, as they bought equities worth Rs 1,076.18 crore, according to exchange data.

Eternal was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, jumping 4.50 per cent, followed by Power Grid, ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries **PHOTO: PTI**

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in the positive territory, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended lower.

European markets were trading higher in mid-session deals, while US markets ended on a mixed note on Wednesday.

The Reserve Bank's rate-setting panel started its three-day brainstorming on monetary policy as expectations are high of a 25 bps or even a jumbo 50 bps rate cut to fuel economic growth amid uncertainties created by Trump's tariff moves.

- Rising for the second straight day, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 443.79 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 81,442.04. During the day, it jumped 912.88 points or 1.12 per cent to 81,911.13. The NSE Nifty rose 130.70 points or 0.53 per cent to 24,750.90

The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by Reserve Bank Governor Sanjay Malhotra, will be announced on Friday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.35 per cent to USD 65.14 a barrel.

On Wednesday, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 260.74 points or 0.32 per cent to settle at 80,998.25. The Nifty went up 77.70 points or 0.32 per cent to 24,620.20. *—PTI*

Rupee rises 7P to close at 85.80 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 5 JUNE

The rupee snapped its two-day losing streak and closed 7 paise higher at 85.80 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, supported by positive domestic equities and a rise in Asian currencies. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit witnessed a volatile trading session -- it opened at 85.86 and moved between a high of 85.67 and a low of 85.96 against the greenback during the day. The local unit pared all its initial gains and settled for the day on the positive territory, higher by 7 paise at 85.80 against the American currency. On Wednesday, the rupee depreciated for the second consecutive session and settled for the day lower by 26 paise at 85.87 against the US dollar. *—PTI*

PHOTO: x

Gold climbs ₹430/10g due to weakening dollar

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

Gold prices jumped Rs 430 in line with strong global cues on Thursday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity appreciated Rs 430 to Rs 99,690 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The precious metal of 99.5 per cent purity increased Rs 400 to Rs 99,100 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Thursday. Additionally, gold futures for August contracts climbed Rs 635 to Rs 99,214 per 10 grams. "Gold prices traded higher, supported by a weaker dollar and renewed safe-haven demand amid lingering tariff uncertainty and US debt concerns. Globally, gold scaled above USD 3,395 per ounce, while MCX gold gained to trade above Rs 98,450," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst, Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said. *—PTI*

Central Bank acquires 25% stake in insurance firm

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

State-owned Central Bank of India on Thursday said it has acquired a 25.18 per cent stake in Future Generali India Life Insurance Company Limited (FGILICL) for a cash consideration of Rs 57 crore as part of the insolvency process. With this, the bank has ventured into the insurance sector, it said in a regulatory filing. At present, Central Bank of India has 25.28 per cent stake in FGILICL, which had earned a gross written premium of Rs 1,810.53 crore in FY24. The CCI has also approved a 25.18 per cent equity stake in Future Generali India Life Insurance Company Ltd (FGILICL) through a bid/resolution plan submitted by Central Bank of India under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016. *—PTI*

India-Italy ties grow with fresh investment vows

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

India has attracted fresh investment commitments from major Italian companies during Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal's recent visit to Italy, signalling growing economic ties between the two nations. Leading the announcements was automotive components manufacturer Carraro Group, which pledged to invest ₹350M in India over the next five to seven years—nearly double its current ₹200M investment. Chairman Enrico Carraro and Carraro India CEO Francesco Sequi cited India's favourable business environment and growth potential. Filtration and thermal management firm UFI Filters also confirmed plans to double its investment in India. Meanwhile, Toschi Vignola, a specialist in Italian food products, is set to significantly expand its operations in India. *—ANI*

LAND AREA LIMIT

Govt eases SEZ rules for semiconductors manufacturing firms

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

The government eased contiguous land area norms for special economic zones (SEZs) which want to engage exclusively in the manufacturing of semiconductors or electronic components, according to a notification. It allowed companies to set up factories on smaller parcels of land.

In SEZs exclusively meant for making semiconductors or electronic components, companies can now set up factories on 10 hectares of land against the earlier 50 hectares.

In multi-product SEZs, the minimum land requirement has been lowered to four hectares from 20. This rule will be applicable in Goa, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Ladakh, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The Commerce Ministry's said that for the purposes of this provision, the electronic components would include display module sub-assembly, camera module sub-assembly, battery sub-assembly, various types of other module sub-assemblies, printed circuit board, Li-ion cells for batteries, mobile and information technology hardware components, hearables and wearables.

The notification also said that the Board of Approval (highest decision-making body for SEZs) can relax the condition of encumbrance-free area, in cases where the area is mortgaged or leased to the central or state government, or their authorised agency. *—Agencies*

Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia is of the view that internet penetration can only be increased through satellite communication services, especially in remote areas where laying wires and installing towers would be difficult **PHOTO: ANI**

Starlink to be 3rd satcom service after Airtel, Jio

GWALIOR, 5 JUNE

Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia on Thursday said Elon Musk's Starlink will be the third satellite internet company to be given a license for providing services in India.

So far, Airtel Bharti's OneWeb and Reliance Jio have received a license from the Department of Telecom, government of India, the minister said. "In the coming days, the third license will be provided," he said, referring to Starlink.

Once licenses are given, the minister said, the spectrum would be allocated to them.

"And after this, the government will provide the spectrum. Subsequently, satellite telecom services will be fully operational in the country at a rapid pace. I am sure the customer base in India will grow substantially," the minister added.

"Starlink's satellite connectivity is like a new flower in the telecom bouquet," he said, explaining the progress of the telecom ecosystem in the country. "Earlier, there was only a fixed line. Today, there is mobile connectivity and broadband connectivity. Optical fibre connectivity has also come in. Along with these, satellite connectivity is also very important," he quipped.

Scindia asserted that internet penetration can only be increased through satellite communication services, especially in remote areas where laying wires and installing towers would be difficult. *—ANI*

India needs 6,900 acres, $9B for EV infra: Report

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

Nearly 6,900 acre of land and USD 9 billion investments will be required by 2030 for setting up facilities for EV (electric vehicle) manufacturing, lithium-ion battery production and public charging stations, according to Savills India.

Real estate consultant Savills India has released report 'Charged for Change: How EVs Are Reshaping Indian Real Estate' stating that the EV market in India has witnessed significant growth in recent years, driven by market forces, government policies, rising environmental concerns, and increasing fuel costs.

"An investment of USD 7.5 to 9 billion will be required by 2030, primarily for land acquisition and the development of facilities for EV manufacturing, lithium-ion battery production, and public charging stations," the consultant said.

In high-adoption scenario, the required investments will be USD 9 billion while USD 7.5 billion will be needed in the case of medium adoption.

The report further estimated 5,760 to 6,852 acres of land by 2030 to support EV manufacturing, lithium-ion battery plants, and public charging infrastructure.

- In high-adoption scenario, the required investments will be USD 9 billion while USD 7.5 billion will be needed in the case of medium adoption

Srinivas N, Managing Director, Industrial & logistics, Savilla India, said, "Aligning with India's target of achieving 30 per cent EV penetration by 2030, the real estate sector is expected to experience significant growth driven by the rise in EV adoption." *—PTI*

Google, Chile ink marine cable pact

SANTIAGO, 5 JUNE

Google signed an agreement with Chile on Wednesday to deploy an undersea fibre optic cable connecting South America with Asia and Oceania, a first-of-its-kind project that aims to cement the South American country's status as a major digital hub.

The Humboldt Cable, envisioned for deployment in 2027, is a 14,800km submarine data cable that will connect Chile's coastal city of Valparaíso with Sydney, Australia through French Polynesia.

The initiative is being launched almost a decade after it was first proposed in 2016, and six years after the initial studies to determine its feasibility.

- The Humboldt Cable is a 14,800km submarine data cable that will connect Chile's coastal city of Valparaíso with Sydney, Australia through French Polynesia

"This is the first submarine cable in the South Pacific, so it's an important commitment", Chilean Transport Minister Juan Carlos Muñoz told journalists.

Chile, home to one of Google's largest data centers in Latin America, is currently connected to the United States and the rest of the region via an undersea cable. This cable also provides Chile with a longer route to other continents. Officials from both Google and the Chilean government hailed the project as critical infrastructure with potential to attract millions of dollars in investment. *—PTI*

Home-cooked meals cheapen as veg prices rise

MUMBAI, 5 JUNE

The cost of home-cooked meals declined slightly in May 2025, driven by lower vegetable prices, according to the latest 'Roti Rice Rate' report by a Crisil subsidiary.

A vegetarian thali cost Rs 26.2 in May, down from Rs 26.3 in April and Rs 27.8 a year ago. The non-vegetarian thali saw a sharper drop to Rs 52.6 from Rs 53.9 in April and Rs 55.9 in May 2024.

The decline was largely due to a 29 per cent year-on-year fall in tomato prices, a 15 per cent drop in onions, and a 16per cent reduction in potatoes. Last year's vegetable prices had surged due to weather challenges and pest issues.

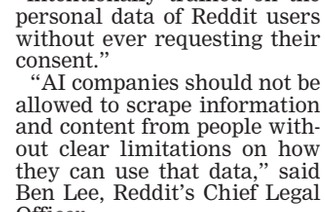
Broiler prices also declined 6 per cent on-year and 4 per cent month-on-month, contributing to the non-veg thali price dip. Oversupply and reduced demand, linked to bird flu cases in parts of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka, were cited as reasons.Vegetable prices may rise again seasonally, though wheat and pulse prices are expected to ease. *—PTI*

INDIAN FIRMS TOP GLOBAL AI ROI RANKINGS: ADOBE

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

Indian businesses are leading the world in realising returns from generative AI, according to Adobe's "2025 AI and Digital Trends – India Snapshot." The study, which surveyed 345 executives and 841 consumers in India, reveals a surge in productivity, efficiency, and content creation through AI adoption.

"Indian businesses are setting the global pace for ROI



on AI initiatives by improving scale, speed, and efficiencies," said Prativa Mohapatra, Vice President and Managing Director, Adobe India. Nearly 23 per cent of organisations in India are already seeing measurable returns from generative AI solutions.

Consumers are also embracing AI-powered tools, with over half preferring virtual assistants for tasks such as appointment scheduling (56 per cent), technical support (56 per cent), and placing orders (52 per cent). This indicates readiness for more advanced agentic AI capabilities.

However, challenges remain. While 85 per cent of executives expect increased content output from AI this year, issues around data, governance, and privacy hinder wider adoption. Over half of practitioners also struggle to maintain a balance between AI-driven automation and human creativity.

Looking ahead, 69per cent of Indian executives believe AI will be the biggest driver of their tech decisions in the coming two years. *—ANI*

Nintendo Switch 2 out after eight-year wait

TOKYO, 5 JUNE

Eager customers lined up outside electronics stores hours in advance in Tokyo on Thursday to collect their pre-ordered Nintendo Switch 2 video game consoles.

The much-anticipated Switch 2 is an upgrade to its eight-year-old predecessor with new social features meant to draw players into online gaming. The new consoles were sold through a competitive lottery system that Nintendo said got about 2.2 million applications in Japan alone.

Outside the official draw, some retailers offered their own lotteries to pre-order the devices.

Koji Takahashi was among those who missed out on the official draw but was selected in the second round of a lottery held by a major electronics retailer in Japan. "I feel very sorry for those who weren't successful in the lottery. But I also had tough time getting this far, so I hope they forgive me!"

- Nintendo has said it expects to sell 15 million Switch 2 consoles for the fiscal year through March 2026

Nintendo has said it expects to sell 15 million Switch 2 consoles for the fiscal year through March 2026.

The company has promised to roll out attractive software for the Switch 2 later this year, including 'The Legend of Zelda' games, a Pokemon title and a Kirby game, as well as offerings from outside software companies. *—PTI*

'INTENTIONALLY TRAINED BOT'

Reddit sues AI firm for 'scraping' comments

SAN FRANCISCO, 5 JUNE

Social media platform Reddit sued artificial intelligence company Anthropic on Wednesday, alleging that it is illegally "scraping" the comments of Reddit users to train its chatbot Claude.

Reddit filed the lawsuit in California Superior Court in San Francisco, where both companies are based.

Reddit claims that Anthropic's automated bots "intentionally trained on the personal data of Reddit users without ever requesting their consent."

"AI companies should not be allowed to scrape information and content from people without clear limitations on how they can use that data," said Ben Lee, Reddit's Chief Legal Officer.

Reddit has previously entered licensing agreements with Google, OpenAI and other companies to enable them to train their AI systems on Reddit commentary.

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Those agreements "enable us to enforce meaningful protections for our users, including the right to delete your content, user privacy protections, and preventing users from being spammed using this content," Lee said.

Anthropic was formed by former OpenAI executives in 2021 and its flagship Claude chatbot remains a key competitor to OpenAI's ChatGPT. Much like other AI companies, it's relied heavily on websites such as Wikipedia and Reddit to train the models.

In a 2021 paper co-authored by Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei — cited in the lawsuit — researchers at the company identified the subreddits, or subject-matter forums, that contained the highest quality data, such as those focused on gardening, history or thoughts people have in the shower.

Anthropic in 2023 argued in a letter to the US Copyright Office that the "way Claude was trained qualifies as a quintessentially lawful use of materials," by making copies of information to perform a statistical analysis of a large body of data.

But Reddit's lawsuit is different from others brought against AI companies because it doesn't allege copyright infringement. Instead, it focuses on the alleged breach of Reddit's terms of use, and the unfair competition, it says, was created. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Ganemat reclaims women's skeet top spot

BHOPAL, 5 JUNE

Punjab's Ganemat Sekhon reclaimed the women's skeet top spot in Indian rankings after the national selection trials (T3) for the shotgun shooters, courtesy of her top score of 116 in qualification at the M.P. State Academy Shooting ranges here. State-mate Abhay Singh Sekhon also climbed atop the men's skeet rankings with his leading qualification score of 120 in the men's T3 competition. Both athletes, however, finished an identical fourth in the finals, with Ganemat bowing out at the 40-shot mark of the 60-shot decider with 32 hits to her name. Abhay had 35 shots.Olympian Anantjeet Singh Naruka won the men's event.—*PTI*

Delhi GM Open offers a prize purse of ₹ 1.21 crore

NEW DELHI, 5 JUNE

The 21st Delhi International Open Grandmasters Chess Tournament will be held here from 7-14 June with participation of over 2,500 players from more than 15 countries and a prize purse of Rs 1.21 crore. Organised by the Delhi Chess Association (DCA), the tournament will feature 20 Grandmasters in action across three rating-based sections. Held under the aegis of the All India Chess Federation (AICF), the Delhi GM Open is Asia's largest classical-format chess event. Bharat Singh Chauhan, President, DCA, said: "For two decades, the Delhi GM Open has helped build the foundation of Indian chess. This is where young talent gets tested, where norms are earned —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Rangers appoint Russell Martin as manager

GLASGOW, 5 JUNE

Six months after being fired by Southampton, Russell Martin crossed the border to take over as manager of Scottish giant Rangers on Thursday and is tasked with regaining the league title from fierce Glasgow rival Celtic. Martin guided Southampton to promotion to the Premier League last year but left in December following one win from the team's first 16 games. The 39-year-old Martin has secured a quick return to management at Rangers, going back to a club where he spent half a season on loan in 2018.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Zack Steffen will miss the Concacaf Gold Cup

LONDON, 5 JUNE

US men's national team goalkeeper Zack Steffen will miss the Concacaf Gold Cup with a knee injury. The US Soccer Federation confirmed Wednesday that Steffen was injured during training. Steffen, 30, departed training camp and returned to the Colorado Rapids to undergo further testing. ESPN reported that Steffen is expected to be sidelined for four to six weeks. The USMNT has upcoming friendlies against Turkey on Friday in East Hartford, Conn., and against Switzerland next Tuesday in Nashville, Tenn.—*PTI*

All eyes are on Rahul in second 4-day game

Shubman Gill-led India squad will depart from Mumbai late on Friday

NORTHAMPTON, 5 JUNE

KL Rahul would look to make the most of his first red-ball outing in months ahead of the Test series against England, while the fringe players will be desperate for impactful performances when India A face the England Lions in their second and final unofficial Test beginning here on Friday.

With major parts of India enduring monsoon, Rahul left for the UK before the main Test squad to train for the five-match series beginning on 20 June. The Shubman Gill-led India squad will depart from Mumbai late on Friday.

Rahul, who has had reasonable success in England, including two hundreds, is the senior-most batter in the Test squad following the high-profile retirements of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli.

THE MATCH STARTS AT 3.30 IST

KL Rahul *PHOTO: X*

Though he averages an underwhelming 33.57 in 58 Tests, most of his success in the traditional format has come at the top of the order. It remains to be seen if he continues to open or bat down the order. Even the likes of Gill and Sai Sudharsan were expected to play the second four-day game, but their IPL commitments did not allow them. The duo would only get the intra-squad game to acclimatise before the first Test in Leeds. As many as six players from the Test squad took part in the first game against England Lions that ended in a drab draw on a docile pitch where a multitude of runs were scored by both teams. Pacer Akash Deep, who did not play in Canterbury, is likely to feature here. With the top three of Yashavi Jaiswal, Abhimanyu Easwaran, and Karun Nair being among the runs in the tour opener, there is a possibility that the likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad and Ishan Kishan would be tried in the middle.

> **Shubman Gill has work to do on Test match batting, and it won't be as easy as captain**
>
>
>
> -Ricky Ponting, Australian great

Nair, fresh off a double century, was able to make the quick switch from white-ball to red-ball cricket, and it would be tough to ignore him for the Test series opener. Rahul, who is good at leaving the ball. —*PTI*

Djokovic beats Zverev, set to face Sinner in SFs

PARIS, 5 JUNE

Novak Djokovic beat Alexander Zverev to reach the semi-final of the French Open 2025 on Wednesday in Paris, becoming the oldest man to do so at Roland Garros since 1968 at the age of 38, according to the ATP Tour website.

The 38-year-old delivered a tactically astute display to prevail 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 and reach a record-extending 51st Grand Slam semi-final. Djokovic successfully deployed a more varied approach to win the match and improve to 9-5 in his Lexus ATP Head2Head series with the German.

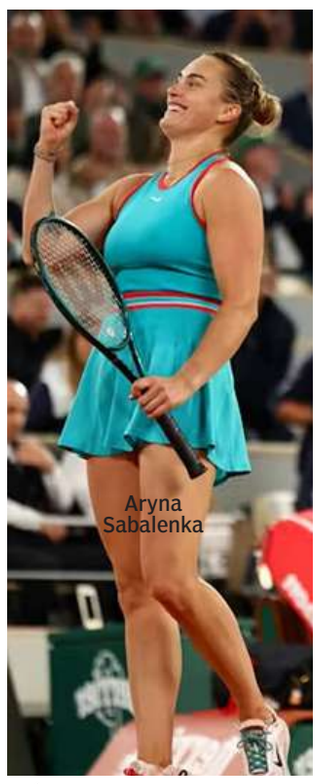
"Especially during the last game, my tactic was just to play drop shots. So I played three or four in a row... Maybe you can't see it on TV, but there is a lot of wind from one side, so it gives the sensation that you must hit twice as hard. It was important to vary the game," Novak Djokovic said after his victory over Alexander Zverev.

With his 101st victory at the clay-court major, three-time champion Djokovic set a semi-final meeting with top seed Jannik Sinner, who earlier eased past Alexander Bublik in straight sets.

No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka reaches final

Top seed Aryna Sabalenka reached the 2025 French Open final after beating defending champion Iga Swiatek.

The Belarusian star claimed a 7-6 (1), 4-6, 6-0 victory in the women's singles semi-final. She showed her agility after losing the second set. It is worth noting that Sabalenka has snapped the 26-match winning streak of Swiatek at Roland Garros. She won the last three editions.



Aryna Sabalenka

Errani, Vavassori win doubles title over US pair

Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori of Italy swept to a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Americans Taylor Townsend and Evan King on Court Philippe Chatrier to claim the French Open mixed doubles crown on Thursday.

Errani and Vavassori claimed their second mixed doubles Grand Slam crown, with the first coming at the U.S Open last year, where they also defeated Townsend and her longtime former partner, Donald Young. —*PTI*

Vani takes one-shot lead in 8th leg of Hero WPGT

BENGALURU, 5 MAY

Vani Kapoor fired six birdies, three on either side of the par-70 Bangalore Golf Club, to card 3-under 67 in the opening round of the 8th Leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour. A three-time winner in the current season, Vani Kapoor recorded one of four under-par rounds of the day, as she led Durga Nittur by one and amateurs Saanvi Somu and Zara Anand by two shots on Thursday

Saanvi, who was runner-up in the opening leg this season at Golmuri in Jamshedpur, shares the lead with Vani Kapoor (67-71) at two-under 138 for 36 holes.Gaurika Bishnoi, playing only her fourth event this season, is in sole third as she shot one-under 69 after a first-round par 70. She is one under 139. Gaurika's last win came in the seventh leg of the 2024 season at Mysuru, and she was runner-up in the fifth and sixth legs. Saanvi has been consistently performing well. —*PTI*

NATIONS LEAGUE

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates scoring their second goal with Portugal's Nuno Mendes *PHOTO: X / @CRISTIANO*

Cristiano Ronaldo leads Portugal past Germany into final

MUNICH, 5 JUNE

Cristiano Ronaldo scored a winner as Portugal rallied from one goal down to beat Germany 2-1 here at Allianz Arena on Wednesday to reach the UEFA Nations League final.

Ronaldo's 137th international goal helped Portugal beat Germany for the first time since 2000.

It will be Portugal's second Nations League final, following its win in the inaugural edition in 2019.

Germany dominated the goalless first half, courtesy of Portugal keeper Diogo Costa, who made some brilliant saves.

Florian Wirtz opened the scoring for Germany in the 48th minute, heading one into the right corner, following a pinpoint lobbed pass from Joshua Kimmich.

However, substitute Francisco Conceicao showed individual brilliance to turn around the match for Portugal by scoring a stunner in the 63rd minute to level the scoring, before Ronaldo tapped in five minutes later after Nuno Mendes provided a perfect pass.

For Conceicao, the win carried extra significance, as his father Sergio scored a hat-trick the last time Portugal beat Germany at the European Championship in 2000.

Portugal coach Roberto Martinez praised his team's effort, saying that the team played exceptionally in terms of tactics. "We need to enjoy the victory – we won for the first time in a while against Germany. Tacticall,y we were exceptional and our commitment helped... it was a team victory," Martinez said. —*PTI*

Sachithra Senanayake indicted for match-fixing

COLOMBO, 5 JUNE

Former Sri Lanka off-spinner Sachithra Senanayake has been indicted by the Hambantota High Court for attempting to lure a fellow player for match-fixing during the 2020 Lanka Premier League (LPL).

The Attorney General's Department said this becomes the first such indictment of a national-level cricketer for match-fixing under the country's recently introduced anti-corruption law. He was arrested and released on bail in 2023.

The 40-year-old played one Test, 49 ODIs, and 24 T20 Internationals for Sri Lanka between 2012 and 2016 for a combined haul of 78 wickets. He was a member of Sri Lanka's 2014 T20 World Cup-winning squad.

According to local media reports, he made a corrupt approach to another national player, Tharindu Ratnayake, who was playing forthe Colombo Kings at that time.

"Senanayake is also alleged to have contacted two other cricketers participating in the inaugural LPL in 2020 via telephone from Dubai. —*PTI*

Satwik-Chirag enter QFs, PV Sindhu loses

JAKARTA, 5 JUNE

India's top men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty advanced to the quarterfinals while two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu lost in the women's singles second round in the Indonesia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament here on Thursday.

Satwik and Chirag, the 2023 champions, showed great temperament under pressure to register a hard-fought 16-21, 21-18, 22-20 win over the world number 16 Danish pair of Rasmus Kjaer and Frederik Sogaard in a 68-minute second-round clash.

The former world number one pair will face Malaysian seventh seeds Man Wei Chong and Kai Wun Tee next.

Earlier, Sindhu faltered in the deciding game to go down to world number 8 Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand in the second round. Sindhu squandered a 15-11 lead in the decider to lose 22-20, 10-21, 18-21 in a gruelling 78-minute battle.

INDIA'S TOP MEN'S DOUBLES PAIR OF SATWIKSAIRAJ RANKIREDDY AND CHIRAG SHETTY

PV Sindhu

PHOTO: PTI

It was a disappointing day for the rest of the Indian contingent, as Sathish Karunakaran and Aadya Variyath, along with the women's doubles pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly, also bowed out in the second round.

While Sathish and Aadya were outclassed 7-21, 12-21 by the sixth-seeded Thai duo of Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Supissara Paewsampran in just 25 minutes, Gayatri and Treesa put up a fight before losing 13-21, 22-24 to Japan's Yuki Fukushima and Mayu Matsumoto in 46 minutes.

The Indians trailed 6-10 at one stage and, although they pulled level with four straight points, the Danish pair kept their nose ahead to pocket the opening game.

The second game was a tight affair, with the Indians putting pressure on the backcourt. From 14-14, Satwik and Chirag reeled off five straight points to force a decider. —*PTI*

NORWAY CHESS

Anand explains Carlsen's meltdown against Gukesh

STAVANGER, 5 JUNE

World no.1 Magnus Carlsen's fiery reaction after losing to D Gukesh in Norway Chess here was probably because he saw his authority in the game being challenged by someone so young, feels five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand, who also indicated that FIDE could discuss the incident "very soon".

Frustrated by the loss to Gukesh in Round 6 of Norway Chess, Carlsen slammed his fist on the table, sending the pieces flying all over before shouting "Oh my God" and leaving the playing arena in a hurry, as millions of followers across the world watched the spectacle, some bewildered, some bemused.

Viswanathan Anand *PHOTO: PTI*

Anand, who is known for his calm demeanour and gentlemanly style, said the 34-year-old Norwegian desperately wanted to win against the Indian world champion and "draw some line in the sand".

"But it (beating Gukesh) mattered a lot to him. Even if all the other games, he's kind of going through emotions (here)... But in this game (against Gukesh), I think he wanted to establish. He wanted to draw some line in the sand and tell all these kids 'Hang on a few years, whatever. But this meant a lot. I think a 2-0 (win against Gukesh) here, he would have been very, very happy," Anand told PTI on the sidelines of Norway Chess on Wednesday.

The fact that he lost from a winning position, perhaps, exacerbated the frustration, opined Anand, who isthe International Chess Federation's (FIDE) deputy president and is here for broadcasting commitments as well. —*PTI*

Theegala withdraws from CO due to neck pain

TORONTO, 5 JUNE

India-American golfer Sahith Theegala has withdrawn from this week's Canadian Open due to a neck pain that he has been battling for the past few weeks. This is now the third time that the 27-year-old has withdrawn in the last five starts. Theegala has also not made it clear whether he would be able to compete next week at the US Open in Oakmont, but he hinted that he might be sidelined for a stretch.

He withdrew from the RBC Canadian Open on Wednesday and was replaced by Cameron Champ. "I've been battling the last few weeks, so this one stings," Theegala wrote in a post on Instagram.

He pulled out of the Truist Championship in May after shooting 78 in the third round. A few days later, he withdrew from the PGA Championship before the tournament began. He returned last week to Muirfield Village for the Memorial but posted 74-77 to miss the cut.—*PTI*